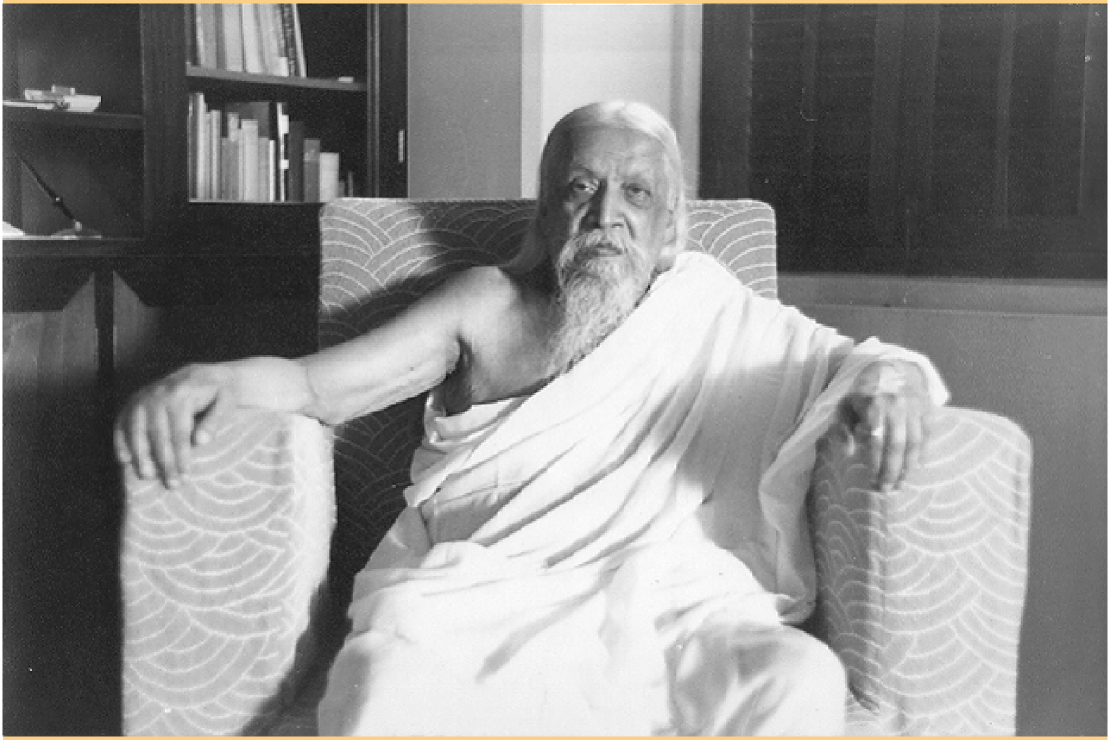
The Secret of the Veda



Sri Aurobindo

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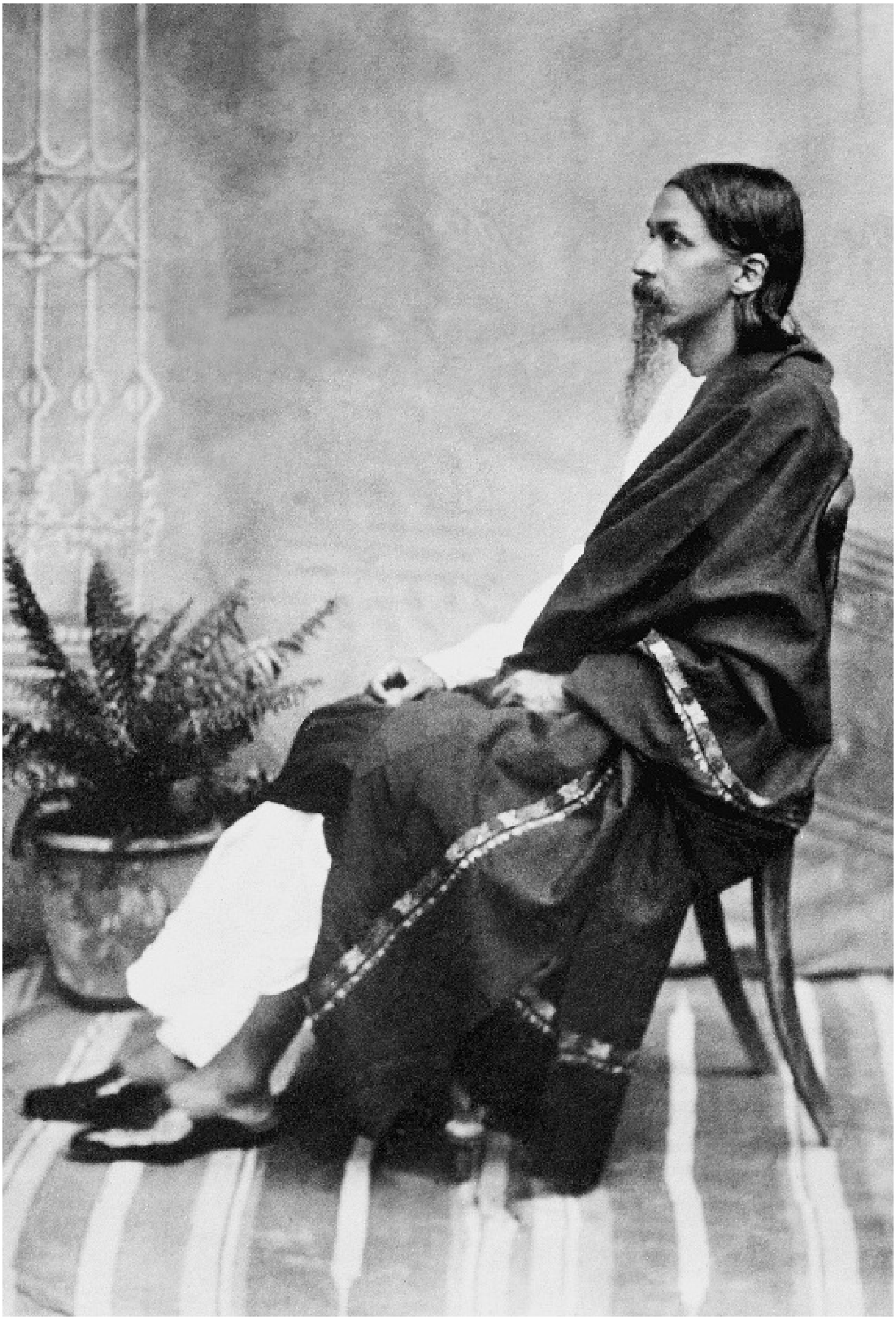
with Selected Hymns

Publisher's Note

This volume comprises Sri Aurobindo's writings on and translations of the Rig Veda that were published in the monthly review *Arya* between 1914 and 1920. Most of this material appeared under three headings:

The Secret of the Veda, August 1914 – July 1916.
Selected Hymns, August 1914 – July 1915.
Hymns of the Atris, August 1915 – December 1917.

These series form the first three parts of the present volume. Other translations of Vedic hymns that came out in the *Arya*, but not under any of the above headings, make up Part Four. Sri Aurobindo's Vedic writings and translations that did not appear in the *Arya* are published in *Vedic Studies with Writings on Philology* and *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*, volumes 14 and 16 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.



Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry

CONTENTS

Part One

The Secret of the Veda

Chapter I

The Problem and Its Solution

IS THERE at all or is there still a secret of the Veda?

According to current conceptions the heart of that ancient mystery has been plucked out and revealed to the gaze of all, or rather no real secret ever existed. The hymns of the Veda are the sacrificial compositions of a primitive and still barbarous race written around a system of ceremonial and propitiatory rites, addressed to personified Powers of Nature and replete with a confused mass of half-formed myth and crude astronomical allegories yet in the making. Only in the later hymns do we perceive the first appearance of deeper psychological and moral ideas — borrowed, some think, from the hostile Dravidians, the "robbers" and "Veda-haters" freely cursed in the hymns themselves, — and, however acquired, the first seed of the later Vedantic speculations. This modern theory is in accord with the received idea of a rapid human evolution from the quite recent savage; it is supported by an imposing apparatus of critical research and upheld by a number of Sciences, unhappily still young and still largely conjectural in their methods and shifting in their results, — Comparative Philology, Comparative Mythology and the Science of Comparative Religion.

It is my object in these chapters to suggest a new view of the ancient problem. I do not propose to use a negative and destructive method directed against the received solutions, but simply to present, positively and constructively, a larger and, in some sort, a complementary hypothesis built upon broader foundations, — a hypothesis which, in addition, may shed light on one or two important problems in the history of ancient thought and cult left very insufficiently solved by the ordinary theories.

We have in the Rig Veda, — the true and only Veda in the estimation of European scholars, — a body of sacrificial hymns

couched in a very ancient language which presents a number of almost insoluble difficulties. It is full of ancient forms and words which do not appear in later speech and have often to be fixed in some doubtful sense by intelligent conjecture; a mass even of the words that it has in common with classical Sanskrit seem to bear or at least to admit another significance than in the later literary tongue; and a multitude of its vocables, especially the most common, those which are most vital to the sense, are capable of a surprising number of unconnected significances which may give, according to our preference in selection, quite different complexions to whole passages, whole hymns and even to the whole thought of the Veda. In the course of several thousands of years there have been at least three considerable attempts, entirely differing from each other in their methods and results, to fix the sense of these ancient litanies. One of these is prehistoric in time and exists only by fragments in the Brahmanas and Upanishads; but we possess in its entirety the traditional interpretation of the Indian scholar Sayana and we have in our own day the interpretation constructed after an immense labour of comparison and conjecture by modern European scholarship. Both of them present one characteristic in common, the extraordinary incoherence and poverty of sense which their results stamp upon the ancient hymns. The separate lines can be given, whether naturally or by force of conjecture, a good sense or a sense that hangs together; the diction that results, if garish in style, if loaded with otiose and decorative epithets, if developing extraordinarily little of meaning in an amazing mass of gaudy figure and verbiage, can be made to run into intelligible sentences; but when we come to read the hymns as a whole we seem to be in the presence of men who, unlike the early writers of other races, were incapable of coherent and natural expression or of connected thought. Except in the briefer and simpler hymns, the language tends to be either obscure or artificial; the thoughts are either unconnected or have to be forced and beaten by the interpreter into a whole. The scholar in dealing with his text is obliged to substitute for interpretation a process almost of fabrication. We feel that he is not so much

revealing the sense as hammering and forging rebellious material into some sort of shape and consistency.

Yet these obscure and barbarous compositions have had the most splendid good fortune in all literary history. They have been the reputed source not only of some of the world's richest and profoundest religions, but of some of its subtlest metaphysical philosophies. In the fixed tradition of thousands of years they have been revered as the origin and standard of all that can be held as authoritative and true in Brahmana and Upanishad, in Tantra and Purana, in the doctrines of great philosophical schools and in the teachings of famous saints and sages. The name borne by them was Veda, the knowledge, — the received name for the highest spiritual truth of which the human mind is capable. But if we accept the current interpretations, whether Sayana's or the modern theory, the whole of this sublime and sacred reputation is a colossal fiction. The hymns are, on the contrary, nothing more than the naive superstitious fancies of untaught and materialistic barbarians concerned only with the most external gains and enjoyments and ignorant of all but the most elementary moral notions or religious aspirations. Nor do occasional passages, quite out of harmony with their general spirit, destroy this total impression. The true foundation or starting-point of the later religions and philosophies is the Upanishads, which have then to be conceived as a revolt of philosophical and speculative minds against the ritualistic materialism of the Vedas.

But this conception, supported by misleading European parallels, really explains nothing. Such profound and ultimate thoughts, such systems of subtle and elaborate psychology as are found in the substance of the Upanishads, do not spring out of a previous void. The human mind in its progress marches from knowledge to knowledge, or it renews and enlarges previous knowledge that has been obscured and overlaid, or it seizes on old imperfect clues and is led by them to new discoveries. The thought of the Upanishads supposes great origins anterior to itself, and these in the ordinary theories are lacking. The hypothesis, invented to fill the gap, that these ideas were borrowed

by barbarous Aryan invaders from the civilised Dravidians, is a conjecture supported only by other conjectures. It is indeed coming to be doubted whether the whole story of an Aryan invasion through the Punjab is not a myth of the philologists.

Now, in ancient Europe the schools of intellectual philosophy were preceded by the secret doctrines of the mystics; Orphic and Eleusinian mysteries prepared the rich soil of mentality out of which sprang Pythagoras and Plato. A similar starting-point is at least probable for the later march of thought in India. Much indeed of the forms and symbols of thought which we find in the Upanishads, much of the substance of the Brahmanas supposes a period in India in which thought took the form or the veil of secret teachings such as those of the Greek mysteries.

Another hiatus left by the received theories is the gulf that divides the material worship of external Nature-Powers in the Veda from the developed religion of the Greeks and from the psychological and spiritual ideas we find attached to the functions of the Gods in the Upanishads and Puranas. We may accept for the present the theory that the earliest fully intelligent form of human religion is necessarily, — since man on earth begins from the external and proceeds to the internal, — a worship of outward Nature-Powers invested with the consciousness and the personality that he finds in his own being.

Agni in the Veda is avowedly Fire; Surya is the Sun, Parjanya the Raincloud, Usha the Dawn; and if the material origin or function of some other Gods is less trenchantly clear, it is easy to render the obscure precise by philological inferences or ingenious speculation. But when we come to the worship of the Greeks not much later in date than the Veda, according to modern ideas of chronology, we find a significant change. The material attributes of the Gods are effaced or have become subordinate to psychological conceptions. The impetuous God of Fire has been converted into a lame God of Labour; Apollo, the Sun, presides over poetical and prophetic inspiration; Athene, who may plausibly be identified as in origin a Dawn-Goddess, has lost all memory of her material functions and is the wise, strong and pure Goddess of Knowledge; and there are other deities

also, Gods of War, Love, Beauty, whose material functions have disappeared if they ever existed. It is not enough to say that this change was inevitable with the progress of human civilisation: the process also of the change demands inquiry and elucidation. We see the same revolution effected in the Puranas partly by the substitution of other divine names and figures, but also in part by the same obscure process that we observe in the evolution of Greek mythology. The river Saraswati has become the Muse and Goddess of Learning; Vishnu and Rudra of the Vedas are now the supreme Godhead, members of a divine Triad and expressive separately of conservative and destructive process in the cosmos. In the Isha Upanishad we find an appeal to Surya as a God of revelatory knowledge by whose action we can arrive at the highest truth. This, too, is his function in the sacred Vedic formula of the Gayatri which was for thousands of years repeated by every Brahmin in his daily meditation; and we may note that this formula is a verse from the Rig Veda, from a hymn of the Rishi Vishwamitra. In the same Upanishad, Agni is invoked for purely moral functions as the purifier from sin, the leader of the soul by the good path to the divine Bliss, and he seems to be identified with the power of the will and responsible for human actions. In other Upanishads the Gods are clearly the symbols of sense-functions in man. Soma, the plant which yielded the mystic wine for the Vedic sacrifice, has become not only the God of the moon, but manifests himself as mind in the human being. These evolutions suppose some period, posterior to the early material worship or superior Pantheistic Animism attributed to the Vedas and prior to the developed Puranic mythology, in which the gods became invested with deeper psychological functions, a period which may well have been the Age of the Mysteries. As things stand, a gap is left or else has been created by our exclusive preoccupation with the naturalistic element in the religion of the Vedic Rishis.

I suggest that the gulf is of our own creation and does not really exist in the ancient sacred writings. The hypothesis I propose is that the Rig Veda is itself the one considerable document that remains to us from the early period of human

thought of which the historic Eleusinian and Orphic mysteries were the failing remnants, when the spiritual and psychological knowledge of the race was concealed, for reasons now difficult to determine, in a veil of concrete and material figures and symbols which protected the sense from the profane and revealed it to the initiated. One of the leading principles of the mystics was the sacredness and secrecy of self-knowledge and the true knowledge of the Gods. This wisdom was, they thought, unfit, perhaps even dangerous to the ordinary human mind or in any case liable to perversion and misuse and loss of virtue if revealed to vulgar and unpurified spirits. Hence they favoured the existence of an outer worship, effective but imperfect, for the profane, an inner discipline for the initiate, and clothed their language in words and images which had, equally, a spiritual sense for the elect, a concrete sense for the mass of ordinary worshippers. The Vedic hymns were conceived and constructed on this principle. Their formulas and ceremonies are, overtly, the details of an outward ritual devised for the Pantheistic Nature-Worship which was then the common religion, covertly the sacred words, the effective symbols of a spiritual experience and knowledge and a psychological discipline of self-culture which were then the highest achievement of the human race. The ritual system recognised by Sayana may, in its externalities, stand; the naturalistic sense discovered by European scholarship may, in its general conceptions, be accepted; but behind them there is always the true and still hidden secret of the Veda, — the secret words, *niṇyā vacāṁsi*, which were spoken for the purified in soul and the awakened in knowledge. To disengage this less obvious but more important sense by fixing the import of Vedic terms, the sense of Vedic symbols and the psychological functions of the Gods is thus a difficult but necessary task, for which these chapters and the translations that accompany them are only a preparation.

The hypothesis, if it proves to be valid, will have three advantages. It will elucidate simply and effectively the parts of the Upanishads that remain yet unintelligible or ill-understood as well as much of the origins of the Puranas. It will explain and

justify rationally the whole ancient tradition of India; for it will be found that, in sober truth, the Vedanta, Purana, Tantra, the philosophical schools and the great Indian religions do go back in their source to Vedic origins. We can see there in their original seed or in their early or even primitive forms the fundamental conceptions of later Indian thought. Thus a natural starting-point will be provided for a sounder study of Comparative Religion in the Indian field. Instead of wandering amid insecure speculations or having to account for impossible conversions and unexplained transitions we shall have a clue to a natural and progressive development satisfying to the reason. Incidentally, some light may be thrown on the obscurities of early cult and myth in other ancient nations. Finally, the incoherencies of the Vedic texts will at once be explained and disappear. They exist in appearance only, because the real thread of the sense is to be found in an inner meaning. That thread found, the hymns appear as logical and organic wholes and the expression, though alien in type to our modern ways of thinking and speaking, becomes, in its own style, just and precise and sins rather by economy of phrase than by excess, by over-pregnancy rather than by poverty of sense. The Veda ceases to be merely an interesting remnant of barbarism and takes rank among the most important of the world's early Scriptures.

Chapter II

A Retrospect of Vedic Theory

VEDA, then, is the creation of an age anterior to our intellectual philosophies. In that original epoch thought proceeded by other methods than those of our logical reasoning and speech accepted modes of expression which in our modern habits would be inadmissible. The wisest then depended on inner experience and the suggestions of the intuitive mind for all knowledge that ranged beyond mankind's ordinary perceptions and daily activities. Their aim was illumination, not logical conviction, their ideal the inspired seer, not the accurate reasoner. Indian tradition has faithfully preserved this account of the origin of the Vedas. The Rishi was not the individual composer of the hymn, but the seer (*draṣṭā*) of an eternal truth and an impersonal knowledge. The language of Veda itself is *Śruti*, a rhythm not composed by the intellect but heard, a divine Word that came vibrating out of the Infinite to the inner audience of the man who had previously made himself fit for the impersonal knowledge. The words themselves, *dṛṣṭi* and *śruti*, sight and hearing, are Vedic expressions; these and cognate words signify, in the esoteric terminology of the hymns, revelatory knowledge and the contents of inspiration.

In the Vedic idea of the revelation there is no suggestion of the miraculous or the supernatural. The Rishi who employed these faculties, had acquired them by a progressive self-culture. Knowledge itself was a travelling and a reaching, or a finding and a winning; the revelation came only at the end, the light was the prize of a final victory. There is continually in the Veda this image of the journey, the soul's march on the path of Truth. On that path, as it advances, it also ascends; new vistas of power and light open to its aspiration; it wins by a heroic effort its enlarged spiritual possessions.

From the historical point of view the Rig Veda may be

regarded as a record of a great advance made by humanity by special means at a certain period of its collective progress. In its esoteric, as well as its exoteric significance, it is the Book of Works, of the inner and the outer sacrifice; it is the spirit's hymn of battle and victory as it discovers and climbs to planes of thought and experience inaccessible to the natural or animal man, man's praise of the divine Light, Power and Grace at work in the mortal. It is far, therefore, from being an attempt to set down the results of intellectual or imaginative speculation, nor does it consist of the dogmas of a primitive religion. Only, out of the sameness of experience and out of the impersonality of the knowledge received, there arise a fixed body of conceptions constantly repeated and a fixed symbolic language which, perhaps, in that early human speech, was the inevitable form of these conceptions because alone capable by its combined concreteness and power of mystic suggestion of expressing that which for the ordinary mind of the race was inexpressible. We have, at any rate, the same notions repeated from hymn to hymn with the same constant terms and figures and frequently in the same phrases with an entire indifference to any search for poetical originality or any demand for novelty of thought and freshness of language. No pursuit of aesthetic grace, richness or beauty induces these mystic poets to vary the consecrated form which had become for them a sort of divine algebra transmitting the eternal formulae of the Knowledge to the continuous succession of the initiates.

The hymns possess indeed a finished metrical form, a constant subtlety and skill in their technique, great variations of style and poetical personality; they are not the work of rude, barbarous and primitive craftsmen, but the living breath of a supreme and conscious Art forming its creations in the puissant but well-governed movement of a self-observing inspiration. Still, all these high gifts have deliberately been exercised within one unvarying framework and always with the same materials. For the art of expression was to the Rishis only a means, not an aim; their principal preoccupation was strenuously practical, almost utilitarian, in the highest sense of utility. The hymn was to the Rishi who composed it a means of spiritual progress

for himself and for others. It rose out of his soul, it became a power of his mind, it was the vehicle of his self-expression in some important or even critical moment of his life's inner history. It helped him to express the god in him, to destroy the devourer, the expresser of evil; it became a weapon in the hands of the Aryan striver after perfection, it flashed forth like Indra's lightning against the Coverer on the slopes, the Wolf on the path, the Robber by the streams.

The invariable fixity of Vedic thought when taken in conjunction with its depth, richness and subtlety, gives rise to some interesting speculations. For we may reasonably argue that such a fixed form and substance would not easily be possible in the beginnings of thought and psychological experience or even during their early progress and unfolding. We may therefore surmise that our actual Sanhita represents the close of a period, not its commencement, nor even some of its successive stages. It is even possible that its most ancient hymns are a comparatively modern development or version of a more ancient[1] lyric evangel couched in the freer and more pliable forms of a still earlier human speech. Or the whole voluminous mass of its litanies may be only a selection by Veda Vyasa out of a more richly vocal Aryan past. Made, according to the common belief, by Krishna of the Isle, the great traditional sage, the colossal compiler (Vyasa), with his face turned towards the commencement of the Iron Age, towards the centuries of increasing twilight and final darkness, it is perhaps only the last testament of the Ages of Intuition, the luminous Dawns of the Forefathers, to their descendants, to a human race already turning in spirit towards the lower levels and the more easy and secure gains — secure perhaps only in appearance — of the physical life and of the intellect and the logical reason.

But these are only speculations and inferences. Certain it is that the old tradition of a progressive obscuration and loss of the Veda as the law of the human cycle has been fully justified

[1] The Veda itself speaks constantly of "ancient" and "modern" Rishis, (*pūrvaḥ* . . . *nūtanaḥ*), the former remote enough to be regarded as a kind of demigods, the first founders of knowledge.

by the event. The obscuration had already proceeded far before the opening of the next great age of Indian spirituality, the Vedantic, which struggled to preserve or recover what it yet could of the ancient knowledge. It could hardly have been otherwise. For the system of the Vedic mystics was founded upon experiences difficult to ordinary mankind and proceeded by the aid of faculties which in most of us are rudimentary and imperfectly developed and, when active at all, are mixed and irregular in their operation. Once the first intensity of the search after truth had passed, periods of fatigue and relaxation were bound to intervene in which the old truths would be partially lost. Nor once lost, could they easily be recovered by scrutinising the sense of the ancient hymns; for those hymns were couched in a language that was deliberately ambiguous.

A tongue unintelligible to us may be correctly understood once a clue has been found; a diction that is deliberately ambiguous, holds its secret much more obstinately and successfully, for it is full of lures and of indications that mislead. Therefore when the Indian mind turned again to review the sense of Veda, the task was difficult and the success only partial. One source of light still existed, the traditional knowledge handed down among those who memorised and explained the Vedic text or had charge of the Vedic ritual, — two functions that had originally been one; for in the early days the priest was also the teacher and seer. But the clearness of this light was already obscured. Even Purohits of repute performed the rites with a very imperfect knowledge of the power and the sense of the sacred words which they repeated. For the material aspects of Vedic worship had grown like a thick crust over the inner knowledge and were stifling what they had once served to protect. The Veda was already a mass of myth and ritual. The power had begun to disappear out of the symbolic ceremony; the light had departed from the mystic parable and left only a surface of apparent grotesqueness and naivete.

The Brahmanas and the Upanishads are the record of a powerful revival which took the sacred text and ritual as a starting-point for a new statement of spiritual thought and experience. This movement had two complementary aspects, one,

the conservation of the forms, another the revelation of the soul of Veda, — the first represented by the Brahmanas,[2] the second by the Upanishads.

The Brahmanas labour to fix and preserve the minutiae of the Vedic ceremony, the conditions of their material effectuality, the symbolic sense and purpose of their different parts, movements, implements, the significance of texts important in the ritual, the drift of obscure allusions, the memory of ancient myths and traditions. Many of their legends are evidently posterior to the hymns, invented to explain passages which were no longer understood; others may have been part of the apparatus of original myth and parable employed by the ancient symbolists or memories of the actual historical circumstances surrounding the composition of the hymns. Oral tradition is always a light that obscures; a new symbolism working upon an old that is half lost, is likely to overgrow rather than reveal it; therefore the Brahmanas, though full of interesting hints, help us very little in our research; nor are they a safe guide to the meaning of separate texts when they attempt an exact and verbal interpretation.

The Rishis of the Upanishads followed another method. They sought to recover the lost or waning knowledge by meditation and spiritual experience and they used the text of the ancient mantras as a prop or an authority for their own intuitions and perceptions; or else the Vedic Word was a seed of thought and vision by which they recovered old truths in new forms. What they found, they expressed in other terms more intelligible to the age in which they lived. In a certain sense their handling of the texts was not disinterested; it was not governed by the scholar's scrupulous desire to arrive at the exact intention of the words and the precise thought of the sentences in their actual framing. They were seekers of a higher than verbal truth and used words merely as suggestions for the illumination towards which they were striving. They knew not or they neglected the etymological

[2] Necessarily, these and other appreciations in the chapter are brief and summary views of certain main tendencies. The Brahmanas for instance have their philosophical passages.

sense and employed often a method of symbolic interpretation of component sounds in which it is very difficult to follow them. For this reason, while the Upanishads are invaluable for the light they shed on the principal ideas and on the psychological system of the ancient Rishis, they help us as little as the Brahmanas in determining the accurate sense of the texts which they quote. Their real work was to found Vedanta rather than to interpret Veda.

For this great movement resulted in a new and more permanently powerful statement of thought and spirituality, Veda culminating in Vedanta. And it held in itself two strong tendencies which worked towards the disintegration of the old Vedic thought and culture. First, it tended to subordinate more and more completely the outward ritual, the material utility of the mantra and the sacrifice to a more purely spiritual aim and intention. The balance, the synthesis preserved by the old Mystics between the external and the internal, the material and the spiritual life was displaced and disorganised. A new balance, a new synthesis was established, leaning finally towards asceticism and renunciation, and maintained itself until it was in its turn displaced and disorganised by the exaggeration of its own tendencies in Buddhism. The sacrifice, the symbolic ritual became more and more a useless survival and even an encumbrance; yet, as so often happens, by the very fact of becoming mechanical and ineffective the importance of everything that was most external in them came to be exaggerated and their minutiae irrationally enforced by that part of the national mind which still clung to them. A sharp practical division came into being, effective though never entirely recognised in theory, between Veda and Vedanta, a distinction which might be expressed in the formula, "the Veda for the priests, the Vedanta for the sages."

The second tendency of the Vedantic movement was to disencumber itself progressively of the symbolic language, the veil of concrete myth and poetic figure, in which the Mystics had shrouded their thought and to substitute a clearer statement and more philosophical language. The complete evolution of this tendency rendered obsolete the utility not only of the Vedic

ritual but of the Vedic text. Upanishads, increasingly clear and direct in their language, became the fountainhead of the highest Indian thought and replaced the inspired verses of Vasishtha and Vishwamitra.[3] The Vedas, becoming less and less the indispensable basis of education, were no longer studied with the same zeal and intelligence; their symbolic language, ceasing to be used, lost the remnant of its inner sense to new generations whose whole manner of thought was different from that of the Vedic forefathers. The Ages of Intuition were passing away into the first dawn of the Age of Reason.

Buddhism completed the revolution and left of the externalities of the ancient world only some venerable pomps and some mechanical usages. It sought to abolish the Vedic sacrifice and to bring into use the popular vernacular in place of the literary tongue. And although the consummation of its work was delayed for several centuries by the revival of Hinduism in the Puranic religions, the Veda itself benefited little by this respite. In order to combat the popularity of the new religion it was necessary to put forward instead of venerable but unintelligible texts Scriptures written in an easy form of a more modern Sanskrit. For the mass of the nation the Puranas pushed aside the Veda and the forms of new religious systems took the place of the ancient ceremonies. As the Veda had passed from the sage to the priest, so now it began to pass from the hands of the priest into the hands of the scholar. And in that keeping it suffered the last mutilation of its sense and the last diminution of its true dignity and sanctity.

Not that the dealings of Indian scholarship with the hymns, beginning from the pre-Christian centuries, have been altogether a record of loss. Rather it is to the scrupulous diligence and conservative tradition of the Pandits that we owe the preservation of Veda at all after its secret had been lost and the hymns themselves had ceased in practice to be a living Scripture. And

[3] Again this expresses the main tendency and is subject to qualification. The Vedas are also quoted as authorities; but as a whole it is the Upanishads that become the Book of Knowledge, the Veda being rather the Book of Works.

even for the recovery of the lost secret the two millenniums of scholastic orthodoxy have left us some invaluable aids, a text determined scrupulously to its very accentuation, the important lexicon of Yaska and Sayana's great commentary which in spite of its many and often startling imperfections remains still for the scholar an indispensable first step towards the formation of a sound Vedic learning.

THE SCHOLARS

The text of the Veda which we possess has remained uncorrupted for over two thousand years. It dates, so far as we know, from that great period of Indian intellectual activity, contemporaneous with the Greek efflorescence, but earlier in its beginnings, which founded the culture and civilisation recorded in the classical literature of the land. We cannot say to how much earlier a date our text may be carried. But there are certain considerations which justify us in supposing for it an almost enormous antiquity. An accurate text, accurate in every syllable, accurate in every accent, was a matter of supreme importance to the Vedic ritualists; for on scrupulous accuracy depended the effectuality of the sacrifice. We are told, for instance, in the Brahmanas the story of Twashtri who, performing a sacrifice to produce an avenger of his son slain by Indra, produced, owing to an error of accentuation, not a slayer of Indra, but one of whom Indra must be the slayer. The prodigious accuracy of the ancient Indian memory is also notorious. And the sanctity of the text prevented such interpolations, alterations, modernising revisions as have replaced by the present form of the Mahabharata the ancient epic of the Kurus. It is not, therefore, at all improbable that we have the Sanhita of Vyasa substantially as it was arranged by the great sage and compiler.

Substantially, not in its present written form. Vedic prosody differed in many respects from the prosody of classical Sanskrit and, especially, employed a greater freedom in the use of that principle of euphonic combination of separate words (*sandhi*) which is so peculiar a feature of the literary tongue. The Vedic

Rishis, as was natural in a living speech, followed the ear rather than fixed rule; sometimes they combined the separate words, sometimes they left them uncombined. But when the Veda came to be written down, the law of euphonic combination had assumed a much more despotic authority over the language and the ancient text was written by the grammarians as far as possible in consonance with its regulations. They were careful, however, to accompany it with another text, called the Padapatha, in which all euphonic combinations were again resolved into the original and separate words and even the components of compound words indicated.

It is a notable tribute to the fidelity of the ancient memorisers that, instead of the confusion to which this system might so easily have given rise, it is always perfectly easy to resolve the formal text into the original harmonies of Vedic prosody. And very few are the instances in which the exactness or the sound judgment of the Padapatha can be called into question.

We have, then, as our basis a text which we can confidently accept and which, even if we hold it in a few instances doubtful or defective, does not at any rate call for that often licentious labour of emendation to which some of the European classics lend themselves. This is, to start with, a priceless advantage for which we cannot be too grateful to the conscientiousness of the old Indian learning.

In certain other directions it might not be safe always to follow implicitly the scholastic tradition, — as in the ascription of the Vedic poems to their respective Rishis, wherever older tradition was not firm and sound. But these are details of minor importance. Nor is there, in my view, any good reason to doubt that we have the hymns arrayed, for the most part, in the right order of their verses and in their exact entirety. The exceptions, if they exist, are negligible in number and importance. When the hymns seem to us incoherent, it is because we do not understand them. Once the clue is found, we discover that they are perfect wholes as admirable in the structure of their thought as in their language and their rhythms.

It is when we come to the interpretation of the Veda and seek

help from ancient Indian scholarship that we feel compelled to make the largest reserves. For even in the earlier days of classical erudition the ritualistic view of the Veda was already dominant, the original sense of the words, the lines, the allusions, the clue to the structure of the thought had been long lost or obscured; nor was there in the erudite that intuition or that spiritual experience which might have partly recovered the lost secret. In such a field mere learning, especially when it is accompanied by an ingenious scholastic mind, is as often a snare as a guide.

In Yaska's lexicon, our most important help, we have to distinguish between two elements of very disparate value. When Yaska gives as a lexicographer the various meanings of Vedic words, his authority is great and the help he gives is of the first importance. It does not appear that he possessed all the ancient significances, for many had been obliterated by Time and Change and in the absence of a scientific Philology could not be restored. But much also had been preserved by tradition. Wherever Yaska preserves this tradition and does not use a grammarian's ingenuity, the meanings he assigns to words, although not always applicable to the text to which he refers them, can yet be confirmed as possible senses by a sound Philology. But Yaska the etymologist does not rank with Yaska the lexicographer. Scientific grammar was first developed by Indian learning, but the beginnings of sound philology we owe to modern research. Nothing can be more fanciful and lawless than the methods of mere ingenuity used by the old etymologists down even to the nineteenth century, whether in Europe or India. And when Yaska follows these methods, we are obliged to part company with him entirely. Nor in his interpretation of particular texts is he more convincing than the later erudition of Sayana.

The commentary of Sayana closes the period of original and living scholastic work on the Veda which Yaska's Nirukta among other important authorities may be said to open. The lexicon was compiled in the earlier vigour of the Indian mind when it was assembling its prehistoric gains as the materials of a fresh outburst of originality; the Commentary is almost the last great work of the kind left to us by the classical tradition

in its final refuge and centre in Southern India before the old culture was dislocated and broken into regional fragments by the shock of the Mahomedan conquest. Since then we have had jets of strong and original effort, scattered attempts at new birth and novel combination, but work of quite this general, massive and monumental character has hardly been possible.

The commanding merits of this great legacy of the past are obvious. Composed by Sayana with the aid of the most learned scholars of his time, it is a work representing an enormous labour of erudition, more perhaps than could have been commanded at that time by a single brain. Yet it bears the stamp of the coordinating mind. It is consistent in the mass in spite of its many inconsistencies of detail, largely planned, yet most simply, composed in a style lucid, terse and possessed of an almost literary grace one would have thought impossible in the traditional form of the Indian commentary. Nowhere is there any display of pedantry; the struggle with the difficulties of the text is skilfully veiled and there is an air of clear acuteness and of assured, yet unassuming authority which imposes even on the dissident. The first Vedic scholars in Europe admired especially the rationality of Sayana's interpretations.

Yet, even for the external sense of the Veda, it is not possible to follow either Sayana's method or his results without the largest reservation. It is not only that he admits in his method licences of language and construction which are unnecessary and sometimes incredible, nor that he arrives at his results, often, by a surprising inconsistency in his interpretation of common Vedic terms and even of fixed Vedic formulae. These are defects of detail, unavoidable perhaps in the state of the materials with which he had to deal. But it is the central defect of Sayana's system that he is obsessed always by the ritualistic formula and seeks continually to force the sense of the Veda into that narrow mould. So he loses many clues of the greatest suggestiveness and importance for the external sense of the ancient Scripture, — a problem quite as interesting as its internal sense. The outcome is a representation of the Rishis, their thoughts, their culture, their aspirations, so narrow and poverty-stricken that, if accepted, it

renders the ancient reverence for the Veda, its sacred authority, its divine reputation quite incomprehensible to the reason or only explicable as a blind and unquestioning tradition of faith starting from an original error.

There are indeed other aspects and elements in the commentary, but they are subordinate or subservient to the main idea. Sayana and his helpers had to work upon a great mass of often conflicting speculation and tradition which still survived from the past. To some of its elements they had to give a formal adhesion, to others they felt bound to grant minor concessions. It is possible that to Sayana's skill in evolving out of previous uncertainty or even confusion an interpretation which had firm shape and consistence, is due the great and long-unquestioned authority of his work.

The first element with which Sayana had to deal, the most interesting to us, was the remnant of the old spiritual, philosophic or psychological interpretations of the Sruti which were the true foundation of its sanctity. So far as these had entered into the current or orthodox[4] conception, Sayana admits them; but they form an exceptional element in his work, insignificant in bulk and in importance. Occasionally he gives a passing mention or concession to less current psychological renderings. He mentions, for instance, but not to admit it, an old interpretation of Vritra as the Coverer who holds back from man the objects of his desire and his aspirations. For Sayana Vritra is either simply the enemy or the physical cloud-demon who holds back the waters and has to be pierced by the Rain-giver.

A second element is the mythological, or, as it might almost be called, the Puranic, — myths and stories of the gods given in their outward form without that deeper sense and symbolic fact which is the justifying truth of all Purana.[5]

[4] I use the word loosely. The terms orthodox and heterodox in the European or sectarian sense have no true application to India where opinion has always been free.

[5] There is reason to suppose that Purana (legend and apologue) and Itihasa (historical tradition) were parts of Vedic culture long before the present forms of the Puranas and historical Epics were evolved.

A third element is the legendary and historic, the stories of old kings and Rishis, given in the Brahmanas or by later tradition in explanation of the obscure allusions of the Veda. Sayana's dealings with this element are marked by some hesitation. Often he accepts them as the right interpretation of the hymns; sometimes he gives an alternative sense with which he has evidently more intellectual sympathy, but wavers between the two authorities.

More important is the element of naturalistic interpretation. Not only are there the obvious or the traditional identifications, Indra, the Maruts, the triple Agni, Surya, Usha, but we find that Mitra was identified with the Day, Varuna with the Night, Aryaman and Bhaga with the Sun, the Ribhus with its rays. We have here the seeds of that naturalistic theory of the Veda to which European learning has given so wide an extension. The old Indian scholars did not use the same freedom or the same systematic minuteness in their speculations. Still this element in Sayana's commentary is the true parent of the European Science of Comparative Mythology.

But it is the ritualistic conception that pervades; that is the persistent note in which all others lose themselves. In the formula of the philosophic schools, the hymns, even while standing as a supreme authority for knowledge, are yet principally and fundamentally concerned with the Karmakanda, with works, — and by works was understood, preeminently, the ritualistic observation of the Vedic sacrifices. Sayana labours always in the light of this idea. Into this mould he moulds the language of the Veda, turning the mass of its characteristic words into the ritualistic significances, — food, priest, giver, wealth, praise, prayer, rite, sacrifice.

Wealth and food; — for it is the most egoistic and materialistic objects that are proposed as the aim of the sacrifice, possessions, strength, power, children, servants, gold, horses, cows, victory, the slaughter and the plunder of enemies, the destruction of rival and malevolent critic. As one reads and finds hymn after hymn interpreted in this sense, one begins to understand better the apparent inconsistency in the attitude of

the Gita which, regarding always the Veda as divine knowledge,[6] yet censures severely the champions of an exclusive Vedism,[7] all whose flowery teachings were devoted solely to material wealth, power and enjoyment.

It is the final and authoritative binding of the Veda to this lowest of all its possible senses that has been the most unfortunate result of Sayana's commentary. The dominance of the ritualistic interpretation had already deprived India of the living use of its greatest Scripture and of the true clue to the entire sense of the Upanishads. Sayana's commentary put a seal of finality on the old misunderstanding which could not be broken for many centuries. And its suggestions, when another civilisation discovered and set itself to study the Veda, became in the European mind the parent of fresh errors.

Nevertheless, if Sayana's work has been a key turned with double lock on the inner sense of the Veda, it is yet indispensable for opening the antechambers of Vedic learning. All the vast labour of European erudition has not been able to replace its utility. At every step we are obliged to differ from it, but at every step we are obliged to use it. It is a necessary springing-board, or a stair that we have to use for entrance, though we must leave it behind if we wish to pass forwards into the penetralia.

[6] Gita XV.15.
[7] Ibid. II.42.

Chapter III

Modern Theories

IT WAS the curiosity of a foreign culture that broke after many centuries the seal of final authoritativeness which Sayana had fixed on the ritualistic interpretation of the Veda. The ancient Scripture was delivered over to a scholarship laborious, bold in speculation, ingenious in its flights of fancy, conscientious according to its own lights, but ill-fitted to understand the method of the old mystic poets; for it was void of any sympathy with that ancient temperament, unprovided with any clue in its own intellectual or spiritual environment to the ideas hidden in the Vedic figures and parables. The result has been of a double character, on the one side the beginnings of a more minute, thorough and careful as well as a freer handling of the problems of Vedic interpretation, on the other hand a final exaggeration of its apparent material sense and the complete obscuration of its true and inner secret.

In spite of the hardiness of its speculations and its freedom in discovery or invention the Vedic scholarship of Europe has really founded itself throughout on the traditional elements preserved in Sayana's commentary and has not attempted an entirely independent handling of the problem. What it found in Sayana and in the Brahmanas it has developed in the light of modern theories and modern knowledge; by ingenious deductions from the comparative method applied to philology, mythology and history, by large amplifications of the existing data with the aid of ingenious speculation, by unification of the scattered indications available it has built up a complete theory of Vedic mythology, Vedic history, Vedic civilisation which fascinates by its detail and thoroughness and conceals by its apparent sureness of method the fact that this imposing edifice has been founded, for the most part, on the sands of conjecture.

The modern theory of the Veda starts with the conception, for which Sayana is responsible, of the Vedas as the hymnal of an early, primitive and largely barbaric society crude in its moral and religious conceptions, rude in its social structure and entirely childlike in its outlook upon the world that environed it. The ritualism which Sayana accepted as part of a divine knowledge and as endowed with a mysterious efficacy, European scholarship accepted as an elaboration of the old savage propitiatory sacrifices offered to imaginary superhuman personalities who might be benevolent or malevolent according as they were worshipped or neglected. The historical element admitted by Sayana was readily seized on and enlarged by new renderings and new explanations of the allusions in the hymns developed in an eager hunt for clues to the primitive history, manners and institutions of those barbarous races. The naturalistic element played a still more important role. The obvious identification of the Vedic gods in their external aspects with certain Nature-Powers was used as the starting-point for a comparative study of Aryan mythologies; the hesitating identification of certain of the less prominent deities as Sun-Powers was taken as a general clue to the system of primitive myth-making and elaborate sun-myth and star-myth theories of comparative mythology were founded. In this new light the Vedic hymnology has come to be interpreted as a half-superstitious, half-poetic allegory of Nature with an important astronomical element. The rest is partly contemporary history, partly the formulae and practices of a sacrificial ritualism, not mystic, but merely primitive and superstitious.

This interpretation is in entire harmony with the scientific theories of early human culture and of the recent emergence from the mere savage which were in vogue throughout the nineteenth century and are even now dominant. But the increase of our knowledge has considerably shaken this first and too hasty generalisation. We now know that remarkable civilisations existed in China, Egypt, Chaldea, Assyria many thousands of years ago, and it is now coming generally to be agreed that Greece and India were no exceptions to the general high culture of Asia and the Mediterranean races. If the Vedic Indians do not get the benefit

of this revised knowledge, it is due to the survival of the theory with which European erudition started, that they belonged to the so-called Aryan race and were on the same level of culture with the early Aryan Greeks, Celts, Germans as they are represented to us in the Homeric poems, the old Norse Sagas and the Roman accounts of the ancient Gaul and Teuton. Hence has arisen the theory that these Aryan races were northern barbarians who broke in from their colder climes on the old and rich civilisations of Mediterranean Europe and Dravidian India.

But the indications in the Veda on which this theory of a recent Aryan invasion is built, are very scanty in quantity and uncertain in their significance. There is no actual mention of any such invasion. The distinction between Aryan and un-Aryan on which so much has been built, seems on the mass of the evidence to indicate a cultural rather than a racial difference.[1] The language of the hymns clearly points to a particular worship or spiritual culture as the distinguishing sign of the Aryan, — a worship of Light and of the powers of Light and a self-discipline based on the culture of the "Truth" and the aspiration to Immortality, — Ritam and Amritam. There is no reliable indication of any racial difference. It is always possible that the bulk of the peoples now inhabiting India may have been the descendants of a new race from more northern latitudes, even perhaps, as argued by Mr. Tilak, from the Arctic regions; but there is nothing in the Veda, as there is nothing in the present ethnological features[2] of the country to prove that this descent took place near to the time of the Vedic hymns or was the slow penetration of a small body of fair-skinned barbarians into a civilised Dravidian peninsula.

[1] It is urged that the Dasyus are described as black of skin and noseless in opposition to the fair and high-nosed Aryans. But the former distinction is certainly applied to the Aryan Gods and the Dasa Powers in the sense of light and darkness, and the word *anāsaḥ* does not mean noseless. Even if it did, it would be wholly inapplicable to the Dravidian races; for the southern nose can give as good an account of itself as any "Aryan" proboscis in the North.

[2] In India we are chiefly familiar with the old philological divisions of the Indian races and with the speculations of Mr. Risley which are founded upon these earlier generalisations. But a more advanced ethnology rejects all linguistic tests and leans to the idea of a single homogeneous race inhabiting the Indian peninsula.

Nor is it a certain conclusion from the data we possess that the early Aryan cultures — supposing the Celt, Teuton, Greek and Indian to represent one common cultural origin, — were really undeveloped and barbarous. A certain pure and high simplicity in their outward life and its organisation, a certain concreteness and vivid human familiarity in their conception of and relations with the gods they worshipped, distinguish the Aryan type from the more sumptuous and materialistic Egypto-Chaldean civilisation and its solemn and occult religions. But those characteristics are not inconsistent with a high internal culture. On the contrary, indications of a great spiritual tradition meet us at many points and negate the ordinary theory. The old Celtic races certainly possessed some of the highest philosophical conceptions and they preserve stamped upon them even to the present day the result of an early mystic and intuitional development which must have been of long standing and highly evolved to have produced such enduring results. In Greece it is probable that the Hellenic type was moulded in the same way by Orphic and Eleusinian influences and that Greek mythology, as it has come down to us, full of delicate psychological suggestions, is a legacy of the Orphic teaching. It would be only consonant with the general tradition if it turned out that Indian civilisation has throughout been the prolongation of tendencies and ideas sown in us by the Vedic forefathers. The extraordinary vitality of these early cultures which still determine for us the principal types of modern man, the main elements of his temperament, the chief tendencies of his thought, art and religion, can have proceeded from no primitive savagery. They are the result of a deep and puissant prehistoric development.

Comparative Mythology has deformed the sense of man's early traditions by ignoring this important stage in human progress. It has founded its interpretation on a theory which saw nothing between the early savage and Plato or the Upanishads. It has supposed the early religions to have been founded on the wonder of barbarians waking up suddenly to the astonishing fact that such strange things as Dawn and Night and the Sun existed and attempting in a crude, barbaric, imaginative way to

explain their existence. And from this childlike wonder we stride at one step to the profound theories of the Greek philosophers and the Vedantic sages. Comparative Mythology is the creation of Hellenists interpreting un-Hellenic data from a standpoint which is itself founded on a misunderstanding of the Greek mind. Its method has been an ingenious play of the poetic imagination rather than a patient scientific research.

If we look at the results of the method, we find an extraordinary confusion of images and of their interpretations in which there is nowhere any coherence or consistency. It is a mass of details running into each other, getting confusedly into each other's way, disagreeing yet entangled, dependent for their validity on the licence of imaginative conjecture as our sole means of knowledge. This incoherence has even been exalted into a standard of truth; for it is seriously argued by eminent scholars that a method arriving at a more logical and well-ordered result would be disproved and discredited by its very coherency, since confusion must be supposed to be the very essence of the early mythopoeic faculty. But in that case there can be nothing binding in the results of Comparative Mythology and one theory will be as good as another; for there is no reason why one particular mass of incoherence should be held to be more valid than another mass of incoherence differently composed.

There is much that is useful in the speculations of Comparative Mythology; but in order that the bulk of its results should be sound and acceptable, it must use a more patient and consistent method and organise itself as part of a well-founded Science of Religion. We must recognise that the old religions were organic systems founded on ideas which were at least as coherent as those which constitute our modern systems of belief. We must recognise also that there has been a perfectly intelligible progressive development from the earlier to the later systems of religious creed and of philosophical thought. It is by studying our data widely and profoundly in this spirit and discovering the true evolution of human thought and belief that we shall arrive at real knowledge. The mere identification of Greek and Sanskrit names and the ingenious discovery that Heracles' pyre is

an image of the setting sun or that Paris and Helen are Greek corruptions of the Vedic Sarama and the Panis make an interesting diversion for an imaginative mind, but can by themselves lead to no serious result, even if they should prove to be correct. Nor is their correctness beyond serious doubt, for it is the vice of the fragmentary and imaginative method by which the sun and star myth interpretations are built up that they can be applied with equal ease and convincingness to any and every human tradition, belief or even actual event of history.[3] With this method we can never be sure where we have hit on a truth or where we are listening to a mere ingenuity.

Comparative Philology can indeed be called to our aid, but, in the present state of that Science, with very little conclusiveness. Modern Philology is an immense advance on anything we have had before the nineteenth century. It has introduced a spirit of order and method in place of mere phantasy; it has given us more correct ideas of the morphology of language and of what is or is not possible in etymology. It has established a few rules which govern the phenomena of the detrition of language and guide us in the identification of the same word or of related words as they appear in the changes of different but kindred tongues. Here, however, its achievements cease. The high hopes which attended its birth, have not been fulfilled by its maturity. It has failed to create a Science of Language and we are still compelled to apply to it the apologetic description given by a great philologist after some decades of earnest labour when he was obliged to speak of his favourite pursuits as "our petty conjectural sciences". But a conjectural Science is no Science at all. Therefore the followers of more exact and scrupulous forms of knowledge refuse that name altogether to Comparative Philology and deny even the possibility of a linguistic science.

There is, in fact, no real certainty as yet in the obtained results of Philology; for beyond one or two laws of a limited

[3] E.g. Christ and his twelve apostles are, a great scholar assures us, the sun and the twelve months. The career of Napoleon is the most perfect Sun-myth in all legend or history.

application there is nowhere a sure basis. Yesterday we were all convinced that Varuna was identical with Ouranos, the Greek heaven; today this identity is denounced to us as a philological error; tomorrow it may be rehabilitated. *Parame vyoman* is a Vedic phrase which most of us would translate "in the highest heaven", but Mr. T. Paramasiva Aiyar in his brilliant and astonishing work, *The Riks*, tells us that it means "in the lowest hollow"; for *vyoman* "means break, fissure, being literally absence of protection, (uma)"; and the reasoning which he uses is so entirely after the fashion of the modern scholar that the philologist is debarred from answering that "absence of protection" cannot possibly mean a fissure and that human language was not constructed on these principles. For Philology has failed to discover the principles on which language was constructed or rather was organically developed, and on the other hand it has preserved a sufficient amount of the old spirit of mere phantasy and ingenuity and is full of precisely such brilliances of hazardous inference. But then we arrive at this result that there is nothing to help us in deciding whether *parame vyoman* in the Veda refers to the highest heaven or to the lowest abyss. It is obvious that a philology so imperfect may be a brilliant aid, but can never be a sure guide to the sense of Veda.

We have to recognise in fact that European scholarship in its dealings with the Veda has derived an excessive prestige from its association in the popular mind with the march of European Science. The truth is that there is an enormous gulf between the patient, scrupulous and exact physical sciences and these other brilliant, but immature branches of learning upon which Vedic scholarship relies. Those are careful of their foundation, slow to generalise, solid in their conclusions; these are compelled to build upon scanty data large and sweeping theories and supply the deficiency of sure indications by an excess of conjecture and hypothesis. They are full of brilliant beginnings, but can come to no secure conclusion. They are the first rough scaffolding for a Science, but they are not as yet Sciences.

It follows that the whole problem of the interpretation of Veda still remains an open field in which any contribution that

can throw light upon the problem should be welcome. Three such contributions have proceeded from Indian scholars. Two of them follow the lines or the methods of European research, while opening up new theories which if established, would considerably alter our view of the external sense of the hymns. Mr. Tilak in his *Arctic Home in the Vedas* has accepted the general conclusions of European scholarship, but by a fresh examination of the Vedic Dawn, the figure of the Vedic cows and the astronomical data of the hymns, has established at least a strong probability that the Aryan races descended originally from the Arctic regions in the glacial period. Mr. T. Paramasiva Aiyar by a still bolder departure has attempted to prove that the whole of the Rig Veda is a figurative representation of the geological phenomena belonging to the new birth of our planet after its long-continued glacial death in the same period of terrestrial evolution. It is difficult to accept in their mass Mr. Aiyar's reasonings and conclusions, but he has at least thrown a new light on the great Vedic mythus of Ahi Vritra and the release of the seven rivers. His interpretation is far more consistent and probable than the current theory which is not borne out by the language of the hymns. Taken in conjunction with Mr. Tilak's work it may serve as the starting-point for a new external interpretation of the old Scripture which will explain much that is now inexplicable and recreate for us the physical origins if not the actual physical environment of the old Aryan world.

The third Indian contribution is older in date, but nearer to my present purpose. It is the remarkable attempt by Swami Dayananda, the founder of the Arya Samaj, to re-establish the Veda as a living religious Scripture. Dayananda took as his basis a free use of the old Indian philology which he found in the Nirukta. Himself a great Sanskrit scholar, he handled his materials with remarkable power and independence. Especially creative was his use of that peculiar feature of the old Sanskrit tongue which is best expressed by a phrase of Sayana's, — the "multi-significance of roots". We shall see that the right following of this clue is of capital importance for understanding the peculiar method of the Vedic Rishis.

Dayananda's interpretation of the hymns is governed by the idea that the Vedas are a plenary revelation of religious, ethical and scientific truth. Its religious teaching is monotheistic and the Vedic gods are different descriptive names of the one Deity; they are at the same time indications of His powers as we see them working in Nature and by a true understanding of the sense of the Vedas we could arrive at all the scientific truths which have been discovered by modern research.

Such a theory is, obviously, difficult to establish. The Rig Veda itself, indeed, asserts[4] that the gods are only different names and expressions of one universal Being who in His own reality transcends the universe; but from the language of the hymns we are compelled to perceive in the gods not only different names, but also different forms, powers and personalities of the one Deva. The monotheism of the Veda includes in itself also the monistic, pantheistic and even polytheistic views of the cosmos and is by no means the trenchant and simple creed of modern Theism. It is only by a violent struggle with the text that we can force on it a less complex aspect.

That the ancient races were far more advanced in the physical sciences than is as yet recognised, may also be admitted. The Egyptians and Chaldeans, we now know, had discovered much that has since been rediscovered by modern Science and much also that has not been rediscovered. The ancient Indians were, at least, no mean astronomers and were always skilful physicians; nor do Hindu medicine and chemistry seem to have been of a foreign origin. It is possible that in other branches also of physical knowledge they were advanced even in early times. But the absolute completeness of scientific revelation asserted by Swami Dayananda will take a great deal of proving.

The hypothesis on which I shall conduct my own enquiry is that the Veda has a double aspect and that the two, though closely related, must be kept apart. The Rishis arranged the substance of their thought in a system of parallelism by which the same deities were at once internal and external Powers of

[4] R.V. I.164.46 and 170.1.

universal Nature, and they managed its expression through a system of double values by which the same language served for their worship in both aspects. But the psychological sense predominates and is more pervading, close-knit and coherent than the physical. The Veda is primarily intended to serve for spiritual enlightenment and self-culture. It is, therefore, this sense which has first to be restored.

To this task each of the ancient and modern systems of interpretation brings an indispensable assistance. Sayana and Yaska supply the ritualistic framework of outward symbols and their large store of traditional significances and explanations. The Upanishads give their clue to the psychological and philosophical ideas of the earlier Rishis and hand down to us their method of spiritual experience and intuition. European scholarship supplies a critical method of comparative research, yet to be perfected, but capable of immensely increasing the materials available and sure eventually to give a scientific certainty and firm intellectual basis which has hitherto been lacking. Dayananda has given the clue to the linguistic secret of the Rishis and reemphasised one central idea of the Vedic religion, the idea of the One Being with the Devas expressing in numerous names and forms the many-sidedness of His unity.

With so much help from the intermediate past we may yet succeed in reconstituting this remoter antiquity and enter by the gate of the Veda into the thoughts and realities of a prehistoric wisdom.

Chapter IV

The Foundations of the Psychological Theory

A HYPOTHESIS of the sense of Veda must always proceed, to be sure and sound, from a basis that clearly emerges in the language of the Veda itself. Even if the bulk of its substance be an arrangement of symbols and figures, the sense of which has to be discovered, yet there should be clear indications in the explicit language of the hymns which will guide us to that sense. Otherwise, the symbols being themselves ambiguous, we shall be in danger of manufacturing a system out of our own imaginations and preferences instead of discovering the real purport of the figures chosen by the Rishis. In that case, however ingenious and complete our theory, it is likely to be a building in the air, brilliant, but without reality or solidity.

Our first duty, therefore, is to determine whether there is, apart from figure and symbol, in the clear language of the hymns a sufficient kernel of psychological notions to justify us in supposing at all a higher than the barbarous and primitive sense of the Veda. And afterwards we have to find, as far as possible from the internal evidence of the Suktas themselves, the interpretation of each symbol and image and the right psychological function of each of the gods. A firm and not a fluctuating sense, founded on good philological justification and fitting naturally into the context wherever it occurs, must be found for each of the fixed terms of the Veda. For, as has already been said, the language of the hymns is a language fixed and invariable; it is the carefully preserved and scrupulously respected diction consistently expressing either a formal creed and ritual or a traditional doctrine and constant experience. If the language of the Vedic Rishis were free and variable, if their ideas were evidently in a state of flux, shifting and uncertain, a convenient licence and incoherence in

the sense we attach to their terminology and the relation we find between their ideas, might be justified or tolerated. But the hymns themselves on the very face of them bear exactly the contrary testimony. We have the right therefore to demand the same fidelity and scrupulousness in the interpreter as in the original he interprets. There is obviously a constant relation between the different notions and cherished terms of the Vedic religion; incoherence and uncertainty in the interpretation will prove, not that the face evidence of the Veda is misleading, but simply that the interpreter has failed to discover the right relations.

If, after this initial labour has been scrupulously and carefully done, it can be shown by a translation of the hymns that the interpretations we had fixed fit in naturally and easily in whatever context, if they are found to illuminate what seemed obscure and to create intelligible and clear coherence where there seemed to be only confusion; if the hymns in their entirety give thus a clear and connected sense and the successive verses show a logical succession of related thoughts, and if the result as a whole be a profound, consistent and antique body of doctrines, then our hypothesis will have a right to stand besides others, to challenge them where they contradict it or to complete them where they are consistent with its findings. Nor will the probability of our hypothesis be lessened, but rather its validity confirmed if it be found that the body of ideas and doctrines thus revealed in the Veda are a more antique form of subsequent Indian thought and religious experience, the natural parent of Vedanta and Purana.

So considerable and minute a labour is beyond the scope of these brief and summary chapters. Their object is only to indicate for those who care to follow the clue I have myself received, the path and its principal turnings, — the results I have arrived at and the main indications by which the Veda itself helps us to arrive at them. And, first, it seems to me advisable to explain the genesis of the theory in my own mind so that the reader may the better understand the line I have taken or, if he chooses, check any prepossessions or personal preferences which may have influenced or limited the right application of reasoning to this difficult problem.

Like the majority of educated Indians I had passively accepted without examination, before myself reading the Veda, the conclusions of European Scholarship both as to the religious and as to the historical and ethnical sense of the ancient hymns. In consequence, following again the ordinary line taken by modernised Hindu opinion, I regarded the Upanishads as the most ancient source of Indian thought and religion, the true Veda, the first Book of Knowledge. The Rig Veda in the modern translations which were all I knew of this profound Scripture, represented for me an important document of our national history, but seemed of small value or importance for the history of thought or for a living spiritual experience.

My first contact with Vedic thought came indirectly while pursuing certain lines of self-development in the way of Indian Yoga, which, without my knowing it, were spontaneously converging towards the ancient and now unfrequented paths followed by our forefathers. At this time there began to arise in my mind an arrangement of symbolic names attached to certain psychological experiences which had begun to regularise themselves; and among them there came the figures of three female energies, Ila, Saraswati, Sarama, representing severally three out of the four faculties of the intuitive reason, — revelation, inspiration and intuition. Two of these names were not well known to me as names of Vedic goddesses, but were connected rather with the current Hindu religion or with old Puranic legend, Saraswati, goddess of learning and Ila, mother of the Lunar dynasty. But Sarama was familiar enough. I was unable, however, to establish any connection between the figure that rose in my mind and the Vedic hound of heaven, who was associated in my memory with the Argive Helen and represented only an image of the physical Dawn entering in its pursuit of the vanished herds of Light into the cave of the Powers of darkness. When once the clue is found, the clue of the physical Light imaging the subjective, it is easy to see that the hound of heaven may be the intuition entering into the dark caverns of the subconscious mind to prepare the delivery and out-flashing of the bright illuminations of knowledge which have there been imprisoned. But the clue was wanting

and I was obliged to suppose an identity of name without any identity of the symbol.

It was my stay in Southern India which first seriously turned my thoughts to the Veda. Two observations that were forced on my mind, gave a serious shock to my second-hand belief in the racial division between Northern Aryans and Southern Dravidians. The distinction had always rested for me on a supposed difference between the physical types of Aryan and Dravidian and a more definite incompatibility between the northern Sanskritic and the southern non-Sanskritic tongues. I knew indeed of the later theories which suppose that a single homogeneous race, Dravidian or Indo-Afghan, inhabits the Indian peninsula; but hitherto I had not attached much importance to these speculations. I could not, however, be long in Southern India without being impressed by the general recurrence of northern or "Aryan" types in the Tamil race. Wherever I turned, I seemed to recognise with a startling distinctness, not only among the Brahmins but in all castes and classes, the old familiar faces, features, figures of my friends of Maharashtra, Gujerat, Hindustan, even, though this similarity was less widely spread, of my own province Bengal. The impression I received was as if an army of all the tribes of the North had descended on the South and submerged any previous populations that may have occupied it. A general impression of a Southern type survived, but it was impossible to fix it rigidly while studying the physiognomy of individuals. And in the end I could not but perceive that whatever admixtures might have taken place, whatever regional differences might have been evolved, there remains, behind all variations, a unity of physical as well as of cultural type[1] throughout India. For the rest, this is a conclusion to which ethnological speculation[2] itself has an increasing tendency.

[1] I prefer not to use the term race, for race is a thing much more obscure and difficult to determine than is usually imagined. In dealing with it the trenchant distinctions current in the popular mind are wholly out of place.

[2] Always supposing that ethnological speculations have at all any validity. The only firm basis of ethnology is the theory of the hereditary invariability of the human skull which is now being challenged. If it disappears, the whole science disappears with it.

But what then of the sharp distinction between Aryan and Dravidian races created by the philologists? It disappears. If at all an Aryan invasion is admitted, we have either to suppose that it flooded India and determined the physical type of the people, with whatever modifications, or that it was the incursion of small bands of a less civilised race who melted away into the original population. We have then to suppose that entering a vast peninsula occupied by a civilised people, builders of great cities, extensive traders, not without mental and spiritual culture, they were yet able to impose on them their own language, religion, ideas and manners. Such a miracle would be just possible if the invaders possessed a very highly organised language, a greater force of creative mind and a more dynamic religious form and spirit.

And there was always the difference of language to support the theory of a meeting of races. But here also my preconceived ideas were disturbed and confounded. For on examining the vocables of the Tamil language, in appearance so foreign to the Sanskritic form and character, I yet found myself continually guided by words or by families of words supposed to be pure Tamil in establishing new relations between Sanskrit and its distant sister, Latin, and occasionally, between the Greek and the Sanskrit. Sometimes the Tamil vocable not only suggested the connection, but proved the missing link in a family of connected words. And it was through this Dravidian language that I came first to perceive what seems to me now the true law, origins and, as it were, the embryology of the Aryan tongues. I was unable to pursue my examination far enough to establish any definite conclusion, but it certainly seems to me that the original connection between the Dravidian and Aryan tongues was far closer and more extensive than is usually supposed and the possibility suggests itself that they may even have been two divergent families derived from one lost primitive tongue. If so, the sole remaining evidence of an Aryan invasion of Dravidian India would be the indications to be found in the Vedic hymns.

It was, therefore, with a double interest that for the first time I took up the Veda in the original, though without any

immediate intention of a close or serious study. It did not take long to see that the Vedic indications of a racial division between Aryans and Dasyus and the identification of the latter with the indigenous Indians were of a far flimsier character than I had supposed. But far more interesting to me was the discovery of a considerable body of profound psychological thought and experience lying neglected in these ancient hymns. And the importance of this element increased in my eyes when I found, first, that the mantras of the Veda illuminated with a clear and exact light psychological experiences of my own for which I had found no sufficient explanation either in European psychology or in the teachings of Yoga or of Vedanta, so far as I was acquainted with them, and, secondly, that they shed light on obscure passages and ideas of the Upanishads to which, previously, I could attach no exact meaning and gave at the same time a new sense to much in the Puranas.

I was helped in arriving at this result by my fortunate ignorance of the commentary of Sayana. For I was left free to attribute their natural psychological significance to many ordinary and current words of the Veda, such as *dhī*, thought or understanding, *manas*, mind, *mati*, thought, feeling or mental state, *manīṣā*, intellect, *ṛtam*, truth; to give their exact shades of sense to *kavi*, seer, *manīṣī*, thinker, *vipra*, *vipaścit*, enlightened in mind, and a number of similar words; and to hazard a psychological sense, justified by more extensive study, for words like *dakṣa* which for Sayana means strength and *śravas* which he renders as wealth, food or fame. The psychological theory of the Veda rests upon our right to concede their natural significance to these vocables.

Sayana gives to the words *dhī*, *ṛtam*, etc., very variable significances. *Ṛtam*, which is almost the key-word of any psychological or spiritual interpretation, is rendered by him sometimes as "truth", more often "sacrifice", occasionally in the sense of water. The psychological interpretation gives it invariably the sense of Truth. *Dhī* is rendered by Sayana variously "thought", "prayer", "action", "food", etc. The psychological interpretation gives it consistently the sense of thought or understanding.

And so with the other fixed terms of Veda. Moreover, Sayana's tendency, is to obliterate all fine shades and distinctions between words and to give them their vaguest general significance. All epithets conveying ideas of mental activity mean for him simply "intelligent", all words suggesting various ideas of force, and the Veda overflows with them, are reduced to the broad idea of strength. I found myself on the contrary impressed by the great importance of fixing and preserving the right shade of meaning and precise association to be given to different words, however close they may be to each other in their general sense. I do not see indeed why we should suppose that the Vedic Rishis, unlike all other masters of poetic style, used words pell-mell and indiscriminately without feeling their just associations and giving them their right and exact force in the verbal combination.

By following this principle I found that without departing from the simple natural and straightforward sense of words and clauses an extraordinarily large body not only of separate verses but of entire passages came at once into evidence which entirely altered the whole character of the Veda. For this Scripture then appeared to have a constant vein of the richest gold of thought and spiritual experience running all through it and appearing sometimes in small streaks, sometimes in larger bands, in the majority of its hymns. Moreover, besides the words that in their plain and ordinary sense give at once a wealth of psychological significance to their context, the Veda is full of others to which it is possible to give either an external and material or an internal and psychological value according to our conception of the general purport of Veda. For instance such words as *rāye*, *rayi*, *rādhas*, *ratna*, may mean either merely material prosperity and riches or internal felicity and plenitude applying itself equally to the subjective and the objective world; *dhana*, *vāja*, *poṣa* may mean either objective wealth, plenty and increase or all possessions internal or external, their plenitude and their growth in the life of the individual. *Rāye* is used in the Upanishads, in a quotation from the Rig Veda, to mean spiritual felicity; why should it be incapable of bearing that sense in the original text? *Vāja* occurs frequently in a context in which every other word has

a psychological significance and the mention of physical plenty comes in with a violent jar of incoherency into the homogeneous totality of the thought. Commonsense, therefore, demands that the use of these words with a psychological import should be admitted in the Veda.

But if this is done consistently, not only whole verses and passages, but whole hymns assume at once the psychological complexion. On one condition this transformation is frequently complete, leaving no word or phrase unaffected, — the condition that we should admit the symbolic character of the Vedic sacrifice. We find in the Gita the word *yajña*, sacrifice, used in a symbolic sense for all action, whether internal or external, that is consecrated to the gods or to the Supreme. Was such symbolic use of the word born of a later philosophical intellectuality, or was it inherent in the Vedic idea of sacrifice? I found that in the Veda itself there were hymns in which the idea of the *yajña* or of the victim is openly symbolical, others in which the veil is quite transparent. The question then arose whether these were later compositions developing an incipient symbolism out of old superstitious practices or rather the occasional plainer statement of a sense which is in most hymns more or less carefully veiled by the figure. If there were no constant recurrence of psychological passages in the Veda, the former explanation would, no doubt, have to be accepted. But on the contrary whole hymns took naturally a psychological sense proceeding with a perfect and luminous coherency from verse to verse, where the only points of obscurity were the mention of the sacrifice or of the offering or sometimes of the officiating priest, who might be either a man or a god. If these words could be interpreted symbolically, I found always that the progression of thought became more perfect, more luminous, more coherent and the sense of the hymn in its entirety was victoriously completed. I felt therefore justified by every canon of sound criticism in pursuing my hypothesis farther and including in it the symbolic sense of the Vedic ritual.

Nevertheless here intervenes the first real difficulty of the psychological interpretation. Hitherto I had been proceeding by a perfectly straightforward and natural method of interpretation

based on the surface meaning of the words and sentences. Now I came to an element in which the surface meaning had, in a sense, to be overridden, and this is a process in which every critical and conscientious mind must find itself beset by continual scruples. Nor can one always be sure, even with the utmost care, of having hit on the right clue and the just interpretation.

The Vedic sacrifice consists of three features, — omitting for the moment the god and the mantra, — the persons who offer, the offering and the fruits of the offering. If the *yajña* is the action consecrated to the gods, I could not but take the *yajamāna*, the giver of the sacrifice, as the doer of the action. *Yajña* is works, internal or external, the *yajamāna* must be the soul or the personality as the doer. But there were also the officiating priests, *hotā*, *ṛtvij*, *purohita*, *brahmā*, *adhvaryu* etc. What was their part in the symbolism? For if we once suppose a symbolic sense for the sacrifice, we must suppose also a symbolic value for each feature of the ceremony. I found that the gods were continually spoken of as priests of the offering and in many passages it was undisguisedly a non-human power or energy which presided over the sacrifice. I perceived also that throughout Veda the elements of our personality are themselves continually personified. I had only to apply this rule inversely and to suppose that the person of the priest in the external figure represented in the internal activities figured a non-human power or energy or an element of our personality. It remained to fix the psychological sense of the different priestly offices. Here I found that the Veda itself presented a clue by its philological indications and insistences, such as the use of the word *purohita* in its separated form with the sense of the representative "put in front" and a frequent reference to the god Agni who symbolises the divine Will or Force in humanity that takes up the action in all consecration of works.

The offerings were more difficult to understand. Even if the Soma-wine by the context in which it occurred, its use and effect and the philological indication of its synonyms, suggested its own interpretation, what could possibly be indicated by the "ghritam", the clarified butter in the sacrifice? And yet the word

as used in the Veda was constantly insisting on its own symbolical significance. What for instance could be made of clarified butter dropping from heaven or dripping from the horses of Indra or dripping from the mind? Obviously, this was grotesque nonsense, if the sense of *ghṛta* as clarified butter was anything more than a symbol used with great looseness, so that often the external sense was wholly or partly put aside in the mind of the thinker. It was possible of course to vary conveniently the sense of the words, to take *ghṛta* sometimes as butter and sometimes as water and *manas* sometimes as the mind, sometimes as food or a cake. But I found that *ghṛta* was constantly used in connection with the thought or the mind, that heaven in Veda was a symbol of the mind, that Indra represented the illuminated mentality and his two horses double energies of that mentality and even that the Veda sometimes speaks plainly of offering the intellect (*manīṣā*) as purified *ghṛta* to the gods, *ghṛtaṁ na pūtaṁ manīṣām*.[3] The word *ghṛta* counts also among its philological significances the sense of a rich or warm brightness. It was by this concurrence of indications that I felt justified in fixing a certain psychological significance for the figure of the clarified butter. And I found the same rule and the same method applicable to other features of the sacrifice.

The fruits of the offering were in appearance purely material — cows, horses, gold, offspring, men, physical strength, victory in battle. Here the difficulty thickened. But I had already found that the Vedic cow was an exceedingly enigmatical animal and came from no earthly herd. The word *go* means both cow and light and in a number of passages evidently meant light even while putting forward the image of the cow. This is clear enough when we have to do with the cows of the sun — the Homeric kine of Helios — and the cows of the Dawn. Psychologically, the physical Light might well be used as a symbol of knowledge and especially of the divine knowledge. But how could this mere possibility be tested and established? I found that passages occurred in which all the surrounding context was psychological

[3] *See Rig Veda I.110.6 and III.2.1. — Ed.*

and only the image of the cow interfered with its obtrusive material suggestion. Indra is invoked as the maker of perfect forms to drink the wine of Soma; drinking he becomes full of ecstasy and a "giver of cows"; then we can attain to his most intimate or his most ultimate right thinkings, then we question him and his clear discernment brings us our highest good. It is obvious that in such a passage these cows cannot be material herds nor would the giving of physical Light carry any sense in the context. In one instance at least the psychological symbolism of the Vedic cow was established with certainty to my mind. I then applied it to other passages in which the word occurred and always I saw that it resulted in the best sense and the greatest possible coherency in the context.

The cow and horse, *go* and *aśva*, are constantly associated. Usha, the Dawn, is described as *gomatī aśvavatī*; Dawn gives to the sacrificer horses and cows. As applied to the physical dawn *gomatī* means accompanied by or bringing the rays of light and is an image of the dawn of illumination in the human mind. Therefore *aśvavatī* also cannot refer merely to the physical steed; it must have a psychological significance as well. A study of the Vedic horse led me to the conclusion that *go* and *aśva* represent the two companion ideas of Light and Energy, Consciousness and Force, which to the Vedic and Vedantic mind were the double or twin aspect of all the activities of existence.

It was apparent, therefore, that the two chief fruits of the Vedic sacrifice, wealth of cows and wealth of horses, were symbolic of richness of mental illumination and abundance of vital energy. It followed that the other fruits continually associated with these two chief results of the Vedic karma must also be capable of a psychological significance. It remained only to fix their exact purport.

Another all-important feature of Vedic symbolism is the system of the worlds and the functions of the gods. I found the clue to the symbolism of the worlds in the Vedic conception of the *vyāhṛtis*, the three symbolic words of the mantra, "OM Bhur Bhuvah Swah", and in the connection of the fourth Vyahriti, Mahas, with the psychological term "Ritam". The Rishis speak

of three cosmic divisions, Earth, the Antariksha or middle region and Heaven (Dyaus); but there is also a greater Heaven (Brihad Dyau) called also the Wide World, the Vast (Brihat), and typified sometimes as the Great Water, Maho Arnas. This "Brihat" is again described as "Ritam Brihat" or in a triple term "Satyam Ritam Brihat". And as the three worlds correspond to the Vyahritis, so this fourth world of the Vastness and the Truth seems to correspond to the fourth Vyahriti mentioned in the Upanishads, Mahas. In the Puranic formula the four are completed by three others, Jana, Tapas and Satya, the three supreme worlds of the Hindu cosmology. In the Veda also we have three supreme worlds whose names are not given. But in the Vedantic and Puranic system the seven worlds correspond to seven psychological principles or forms of existence, Sat, Chit, Ananda, Vijnana, Manas, Prana and Anna. Now Vijnana, the central principle, the principle of Mahas, the great world, is the Truth of things, identical with the Vedic Ritam which is the principle of Brihat, the Vast, and while in the Puranic system Mahas is followed in the ascending order by Jana, the world of Ananda, of the divine Bliss, in the Veda also Ritam, the Truth, leads upward to Mayas, Bliss. We may, therefore, be fairly sure that the two systems are identical and that both depend on the same idea of seven principles of subjective consciousness formulating themselves in seven objective worlds. On this principle I was able to identify the Vedic worlds with the corresponding psychological planes of consciousness and the whole Vedic system became clear to my mind.

With so much established the rest followed naturally and inevitably. I had already seen that the central idea of the Vedic Rishis was the transition of the human soul from a state of death to a state of immortality by the exchange of the Falsehood for the Truth, of divided and limited being for integrality and infinity. Death is the mortal state of Matter with Mind and Life involved in it; Immortality is a state of infinite being, consciousness and bliss. Man rises beyond the two firmaments, Rodasi, Heaven and Earth, mind and body, to the infinity of the Truth, Mahas,

and so to the divine Bliss. This is the "great passage" discovered by the Ancestors, the ancient Rishis.

The gods I found to be described as children of Light, sons of Aditi, of Infinity; and without exception they are described as increasing man, bringing him light, pouring on him the fullness of the waters, the abundance of the heavens, increasing the truth in him, building up the divine worlds, leading him against all attacks to the great goal, the integral felicity, the perfect bliss. Their separate functions emerged by means of their activities, their epithets, the psychological sense of the legends connected with them, the indications of the Upanishads and Puranas, the occasional side-lights from Greek myth. On the other hand the demons who opposed them, are all powers of division and limitation, Coverers, Tearers, Devourers, Confiners, Dualisers, Obstructers, as their names indicate, powers that work against the free and unified integrality of the being. These Vritras, Panis, Atris, Rakshasas, Sambara, Vala, Namuchi, are not Dravidian kings and gods, as the modern mind with its exaggerated historic sense would like them to be; they represent a more antique idea better suited to the religious and ethical preoccupations of our forefathers. They represent the struggle between the powers of the higher Good and the lower desire, and this conception of the Rig Veda and the same opposition of good and evil otherwise expressed, with less psychological subtlety, with more ethical directness in the scriptures of the Zoroastrians, our ancient neighbours and kindred, proceeded probably from a common original discipline of the Aryan culture.

Finally, I found that the systematic symbolism of the Veda was extended to the legends related of the gods and of their dealings with the ancient seers. Some of these myths, if not all, may have had, in all probability had, a naturalistic and astronomical origin; but, if so, their original sense had been supplemented by a psychological symbolism. Once the sense of the Vedic symbols is known, the spiritual intention of these legends becomes apparent and inevitable. Every element of the Veda is inextricably bound up with every other and the very nature of these compositions compels us, once we have adopted a principle of interpretation,

to carry it to its farthest rational limits. Their materials have been skilfully welded together by firm hands and any inconsistency in our handling of them shatters the whole fabric of their sense and their coherent thinking.

Thus there emerged in my mind, revealing itself as it were out of the ancient verses, a Veda which was throughout the Scripture of a great and antique religion already equipped with a profound psychological discipline, — a Scripture not confused in thought or primitive in its substance, not a medley of heterogeneous or barbarous elements, but one, complete and self-conscious in its purpose and in its purport, veiled indeed by the cover, sometimes thick, sometimes transparent, of another and material sense, but never losing sight even for a single moment of its high spiritual aim and tendency.

Chapter V

The Philological Method of the Veda

NO INTERPRETATION of the Veda can be sound which does not rest on a sound and secure philological basis; and yet this scripture with its obscure and antique tongue of which it is the sole remaining document offers unique philological difficulties. To rely entirely on the traditional and often imaginative renderings of the Indian scholars is impossible for any critical mind. Modern philology strives after a more secure and scientific basis, but has not yet found it.

In the psychological interpretation of the Veda there are, especially, two difficulties which can only be met by a satisfactory philological justification. This interpretation necessitates the acceptance of several new senses for a fair number of fixed technical terms of the Veda, — terms, for example like *ūti*, *avas*, *vayas*. These new renderings satisfy one test we may fairly demand; they fit into every context, clarify the sense and free us from the necessity of attributing quite different significances to the same term in a work of so fixed a form as the Veda. But this test is not sufficient. We must have, besides, a philological basis which will not only account for the new sense, but also explain how a single word came to be capable of so many different meanings, the sense attached to it by the psychological interpretation, those given to it by the old grammarians and those, if any, which are attached to it in later Sanskrit. But this is not easily possible unless we find a more scientific basis for our philological deductions than our present knowledge affords.

Secondly, the theory of the psychological interpretation depends very often on the use of a double meaning for important words, — the key-words of the secret teaching. The figure is one that is traditional in Sanskrit literature and sometimes employed with an excess of artifice in the later classical works; it is the *śleṣa* or rhetorical figure of double entendre. But its very artificiality

predisposes us to believe that this poetical device must belong necessarily to a later and more sophisticated culture. How are we to account for its constant presence in a work of the remotest antiquity? Moreover, there is a peculiar extension of it in the Vedic use, a deliberate employment of the "multi-significance" of Sanskrit roots in order to pack as much meaning as possible into a single word, which at first sight enhances the difficulty of the problem to an extraordinary degree. For instance, the word, *aśva*, usually signifying a horse, is used as a figure of the Prana, the nervous energy, the vital breath, the half-mental, half-material dynamism which links mind and matter. Its root is capable, among other senses, of the ideas of impulsion, force, possession, enjoyment, and we find all these meanings united in this figure of the Steed of Life to indicate the essential tendencies of the Pranic energy. Such a use of language would not be possible if the tongue of the Aryan forefathers obeyed the same conventions as our modern speech or were in the same stage of development. But if we can suppose that there was some peculiarity in the old Aryan tongue as it was used by the Vedic Rishis by which words were felt to be more alive, less merely conventional symbols of ideas, more free in their transitions of meaning than in our later use of speech, then we shall find that these devices were not at all artificial or far-fetched to their employers, but were rather the first natural means which would suggest themselves to men anxious at once to find new, brief and adequate formulae of speech for psychological conceptions not understood by the vulgar and to conceal the ideas contained in their formulae from a profane intelligence. I believe that this is the true explanation; it can be established, I think, by a study of the development of Aryan speech that language did pass through a stage peculiarly favourable to this cryptic and psychological use of words which in their popular handling have a plain, precise and physical significance.

I have already indicated that my first study of Tamil words had brought me to what seemed a clue to the very origins and structure of the ancient Sanskrit tongue; and so far did this clue lead that I lost sight entirely of my original subject of interest, the

connections between Aryan and Dravidian speech, and plunged into the far more interesting research of the origins and laws of development of human language itself. It seems to me that this great inquiry and not the ordinary preoccupations of linguistic scholars should be the first and central aim of any true science of Philology.

Owing to the failure of the first hopes which attended the birth of modern Philology, its meagre results, its crystallisation into the character of a "petty conjectural science", the idea of a Science of Language is now discredited and its very possibility, on quite insufficient reasoning, entirely denied. It seems to me impossible to acquiesce in such a final negation. If there is one thing that Modern Science has triumphantly established, it is the reign of law and process of evolution in the history of all earthly things. Whatever may be the deeper nature of Speech, in its outward manifestation as human language it is an organism, a growth, a terrestrial evolution. It contains indeed a constant psychological element and is therefore more free, flexible, consciously self-adaptive than purely physical organisms; its secret is more difficult to seize, its constituents yield themselves only to more subtle and less trenchant methods of analysis. But law and process exist in mental no less than in material phenomena in spite of their more volatile and variable appearances. Law and process must have governed the origins and developments of language. Given the necessary clue and sufficient data, they must be discoverable. It seems to me that in the Sanskrit language the clue can be found, the data lie ready for investigation.

The error of Philology which prevented it from arriving at a more satisfactory result in this direction, was its preoccupation in the physical parts of speech with the exterior morphology of language and in its psychological parts with the equally external connections of formed vocables and of grammatical inflexions in kindred languages. But the true method of Science is to go back to the origins, the embryology, the elements and more obscure processes of things. From the obvious only the obvious and superficial results. The profundities of things, their real truth, can best be discovered by penetration into the hidden things that

the surface of phenomena conceals, into that past development of which the finished forms present only secret and dispersed indications or into the possibilities from which the actualities we see are only a narrow selection. A similar method applied to the earlier forms of human speech can alone give us a real Science of Language.

It is not in a short chapter of a treatise itself brief and devoted to another subject that it is at all possible to present the results of the work that I have attempted on these lines.[1] I can only briefly indicate the one or two features which bear directly on the subject of Vedic interpretation. And I mention them here solely to avoid any supposition in the minds of my readers that in departing from the received senses of certain Vedic words I have simply taken advantage of that freedom of ingenious conjecture which is at once one of the great attractions and one of the most serious weaknesses of modern Philology.

My researches first convinced me that words, like plants, like animals, are in no sense artificial products, but growths, — living growths of sound with certain seed-sounds as their basis. Out of these seed-sounds develop a small number of primitive root-words with an immense progeny which have their successive generations and arrange themselves in tribes, clans, families, selective groups each having a common stock and a common psychological history. For the factor which presided over the development of language was the association, by the nervous mind of primitive man, of certain general significances or rather of certain general utilities and sense-values with articulate sounds. The process of this association was also in no sense artificial but natural, governed by simple and definite psychological laws.

In their beginnings language-sounds were not used to express what we should call ideas; they were rather the vocal equivalents of certain general sensations and emotion-values. It was the nerves and not the intellect which created speech. To

[1] I propose to deal with them in a separate work on "The Origins of Aryan Speech". [*See* Vedic Studies with Writings on Philology, *volume 14 of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.]

use Vedic symbols, Agni and Vayu, not Indra, were the original artificers of human language. Mind has emerged out of vital and sensational activities; intellect in man has built itself upon a basis of sense-associations and sense-reactions. By a similar process the intellectual use of language has developed by a natural law out of the sensational and emotional. Words, which were originally vital ejections full of a vague sense-potentiality, have evolved into fixed symbols of precise intellectual significances.

In consequence, the word originally was not fixed to any precise idea. It had a general character or quality (*guṇa*), which was capable of a great number of applications and therefore of a great number of possible significances. And this *guṇa* and its results it shared with many kindred sounds. At first, therefore, word-clans, word-families started life on the communal system with a common stock of possible and realised significances and a common right to all of them; their individuality lay rather in shades of expression of the same ideas than in any exclusive right to the expression of a single idea. The early history of language was a development from this communal life of words to a system of individual property in one or more intellectual significances. The principle of partition was at first fluid, then increased in rigidity, until word-families and finally single words were able to start life on their own account. The last stage of the entirely natural growth of language comes when the life of the word is entirely subjected to the life of the idea which it represents. For in the first state of language the word is as living or even a more living force than its idea; sound determines sense. In its last state the positions have been reversed; the idea becomes all-important, the sound secondary.

Another feature of the early history of language is that it expresses at first a remarkably small stock of ideas and these are the most general notions possible and generally the most concrete, such as light, motion, touch, substance, extension, force, speed, etc. Afterwards there is a gradual increase in variety of idea and precision of idea. The progression is from the general to the particular, from the vague to the precise, from the physical to the mental, from the concrete to the abstract, from the

expression of an abundant variety of sensations about similar things to the expression of precise difference between similar things, feelings and actions. This progression is worked out by processes of association in ideas which are always the same, always recurrent and, although no doubt due to the environments and actual experiences of the men who spoke the language, wear the appearance of fixed natural laws of development. And after all what is a law but a process which has been worked out by the nature of things in response to the necessities of their environment and has become the fixed habit of their action?

From this past history of language certain consequences derive which are of considerable importance in Vedic interpretation. In the first place by a knowledge of the laws under which the relations of sound and sense formed themselves in the Sanskrit tongue and by a careful and minute study of its word-families it is possible to a great extent to restore the past history of individual words. It is possible to account for the meanings actually possessed by them, to show how they were worked out through the various stages of language-development, to establish the mutual relations of different significances and to explain how they came to be attached to the same word in spite of the wide difference and sometimes even the direct contrariety of their sense-values. It is possible also to restore lost senses of words on a sure and scientific basis and to justify them by an appeal to the observed laws of association which governed the development of the old Aryan tongues, to the secret evidence of the word itself and to the corroborative evidence of its immediate kindred. Thus instead of having a purely floating and conjectural basis for our dealings with the vocables of the Vedic language, we can work with confidence upon a solid and reliable foundation.

Naturally, it does not follow that because a Vedic word may or must have had at one time a particular significance, that significance can be safely applied to the actual text of the Veda. But we do establish a sound sense and a clear possibility of its being the right sense for the Veda. The rest is a matter of comparative study of the passages in which the word occurs and of constant fitness in the context. I have continually found that

a sense thus restored illumines always the context wherever it is applied and on the other hand that a sense demanded always by the context is precisely that to which we are led by the history of the word. This is a sufficient basis for a moral, if not for an absolute certainty.

Secondly, one remarkable feature of language in its inception is the enormous number of different meanings of which a single word was capable and also the enormous number of words which could be used to represent a single idea. Afterwards this tropical luxuriance came to be cut down. The intellect intervened with its growing need of precision, its growing sense of economy. The bearing capacity of words progressively diminished; and it became less and less tolerable to be burdened with a superfluous number of words for the same idea, a redundant variety of ideas for the same word. A considerable, though not too rigid economy in these respects, modified by a demand for a temperate richness of variation, became the final law of language. But the Sanskrit tongue never quite reached the final stages of this development; it dissolved too early into the Prakrit dialects. Even in its latest and most literary form it is lavish of varieties of meanings for the same word; it overflows with a redundant wealth of synonyms. Hence its extraordinary capacity for rhetorical devices which in any other language would be difficult, forced and hopelessly artificial, and especially for the figure of double sense, of *śleṣa*.

The Vedic Sanskrit represents a still earlier stratum in the development of language. Even in its outward features it is less fixed than any classical tongue; it abounds in a variety of forms and inflexions; it is fluid and vague, yet richly subtle in its use of cases and tenses. And on its psychological side it has not yet crystallised, is not entirely hardened into the rigid forms of intellectual precision. The word for the Vedic Rishi is still a living thing, a thing of power, creative, formative. It is not yet a conventional symbol for an idea, but itself the parent and former of ideas. It carries within it the memory of its roots, is still conscient of its own history.

The Rishis' use of language was governed by this ancient

psychology of the Word. When in English we use the word "wolf" or "cow", we mean by it simply the animal designated; we are not conscious of any reason why we should use that particular sound for the idea except the immemorial custom of the language; and we cannot use it for any other sense or purpose except by an artificial device of style. But for the Vedic Rishi "vrika" meant the tearer and therefore, among other applications of the sense, a wolf; "dhenu" meant the fosterer, nourisher, and therefore a cow. But the original and general sense predominates, the derived and particular is secondary. Therefore, it was possible for the fashioner of the hymn to use these common words with a great pliability, sometimes putting forward the image of the wolf or the cow, sometimes using it to colour the more general sense, sometimes keeping it merely as a conventional figure for the psychological conception on which his mind was dwelling, sometimes losing sight of the image altogether. It is in the light of this psychology of the old language that we have to understand the peculiar figures of Vedic symbolism as handled by the Rishis, even to the most apparently common and concrete. It is so that words like "ghritam", the clarified butter, "soma", the sacred wine, and a host of others are used.

Moreover, the partitions made by the thought between different senses of the same word were much less separative than in modern speech. In English "fleet" meaning a number of ships and "fleet" meaning swift are two different words; when we use "fleet" in the first sense we do not think of the swiftness of the ship's motion, nor when we use it in the second, do we recall the image of ships gliding rapidly over the ocean. But this was precisely what was apt to occur in the Vedic use of language. "Bhaga", enjoyment, and "bhaga", share, were for the Vedic mind not different words, but one word which had developed two different uses. Therefore it was easy for the Rishis to employ it in one of the two senses with the other at the back of the mind colouring its overt connotation or even to use it equally in both senses at a time by a sort of figure of cumulative significance. "Chanas" meant food but also it meant "enjoyment, pleasure"; therefore it could be used by the Rishi to suggest to the profane

mind only the food given at the sacrifice to the gods, but for the initiated it meant the Ananda, the joy of the divine bliss entering into the physical consciousness and at the same time suggested the image of the Soma-wine, at once the food of the gods and the Vedic symbol of the Ananda.

We see everywhere this use of language dominating the Word of the Vedic hymns. It was the great device by which the ancient Mystics overcame the difficulty of their task. Agni for the ordinary worshipper may have meant simply the god of the Vedic fire, or it may have meant the principle of Heat and Light in physical Nature, or to the most ignorant it may have meant simply a superhuman personage, one of the many "givers of wealth", satisfiers of human desire. How suggest to those capable of a deeper conception the psychological functions of the God? The word itself fulfilled that service. For Agni meant the Strong, it meant the Bright, or even Force, Brilliance. So it could easily recall to the initiated, wherever it occurred, the idea of the illumined Energy which builds up the worlds and which exalts man to the Highest, the doer of the great work, the Purohit of the human sacrifice.

Or how keep it in the mind of the hearer that all these gods are personalities of the one universal Deva? The names of the gods in their very meaning recall that they are only epithets, significant names, descriptions, not personal appellations. Mitra is the Deva as the Lord of love and harmony, Bhaga as the Lord of enjoyment, Surya as the Lord of illumination, Varuna as the all-pervading Vastness and purity of the Divine supporting and perfecting the world. "The Existent is One," says the Rishi Dirghatamas, "but the sages express It variously; they say Indra, Varuna, Mitra, Agni; they call It Agni, Yama, Matarishwan." The initiate in the earlier days of the Vedic knowledge had no need of this express statement. The names of the gods carried to him their own significance and recalled the great fundamental truth which remained with him always.

But in the later ages the very device used by the Rishis turned against the preservation of the knowledge. For language changed its character, rejected its earlier pliability, shed off old

familiar senses; the word contracted and shrank into its outer and concrete significance. The ambrosial wine of the Ananda was forgotten in the physical offering; the image of the clarified butter recalled only the gross libation to mythological deities, lords of the fire and the cloud and the storm-blast, godheads void of any but a material energy and an external lustre. The letter lived on when the spirit was forgotten; the symbol, the body of the doctrine, remained, but the soul of knowledge had fled from its coverings.

Chapter VI

Agni and the Truth

THE RIG VEDA is one in all its parts. Whichever of its ten Mandalas we choose, we find the same substance, the same ideas, the same images, the same phrases. The Rishis are the seers of a single truth and use in its expression a common language. They differ in temperament and personality; some are inclined to a more rich, subtle and profound use of Vedic symbolism; others give voice to their spiritual experience in a barer and simpler diction, with less fertility of thought, richness of poetical image or depth and fullness of suggestion. Often the songs of one seer vary in their manner, range from the utmost simplicity to the most curious richness. Or there are risings and fallings in the same hymn; it proceeds from the most ordinary conventions of the general symbol of sacrifice to a movement of packed and complex thought. Some of the Suktas are plain and almost modern in their language; others baffle us at first by their semblance of antique obscurity. But these differences of manner take nothing from the unity of spiritual experience, nor are they complicated by any variation of the fixed terms and the common formulae. In the deep and mystic style of Dirghatamas Auchathya as in the melodious lucidity of Medhatithi Kanwa, in the puissant and energetic hymns of Vishwamitra as in Vasishtha's even harmonies we have the same firm foundation of knowledge and the same scrupulous adherence to the sacred conventions of the Initiates.

From this peculiarity of the Vedic compositions it results that the method of interpretation which I have described can be equally well illustrated from a number of scattered Suktas selected from the ten Mandalas or from any small block of hymns by a single Rishi. If my purpose were to establish beyond all possibility of objection the interpretation which I am now offering, a much more detailed and considerable work would

be necessary. A critical scrutiny covering the whole of the ten Mandalas would be indispensable. To justify for instance the idea I attach to the Vedic term Ritam, the Truth, or my explanation of the symbol of the Cow of Light, I should have to cite all passages of any importance in which the idea of the Truth or the image of the Cow are introduced and establish my thesis by an examination of their sense and context. Or if I wish to prove that Indra in the Veda is really in his psychological functions the master of luminous mind typified by Dyaus, or Heaven, with its three shining realms, Rochana, I should have to examine similarly the hymns addressed to Indra and the passages in which there is a clear mention of the Vedic system of worlds. Nor could this be sufficient, so intertwined and interdependent are the notions of the Veda, without some scrutiny of the other Gods and of other important psychological terms connected with the idea of the Truth and of the mental illumination through which man arrives at it. I recognise the necessity of such a work of justification and hope to follow it out in other studies on the Vedic Truth, on the Gods of the Veda and on Vedic symbols. But a labour of this scope would be beyond the range of the present work, which is confined merely to an illustration of my method and to a brief statement of the results of my theory.

In order to illustrate the method I propose to take the first eleven Suktas of the first Mandala and to show how some of the central ideas of a psychological interpretation arise out of certain important passages or single hymns and how the surrounding context of the passages and the general thought of the hymns assume an entirely new appearance in the light of this profounder thinking.

The Sanhita of the Rig Veda, as we possess it, is arranged in ten books or Mandalas. A double principle is observed in the arrangement. Six of the Mandalas are given each to the hymns of a single Rishi or family of Rishis. Thus the second is devoted chiefly to the Suktas of the Rishi Gritsamada, the third and the seventh similarly to the great names of Vishwamitra and Vasishtha respectively, the fourth to Vamadeva, the sixth to

Bharadwaja. The fifth is occupied by the hymns of the house of Atri. In each of these Mandalas the Suktas addressed to Agni are first collected together and followed by those of which Indra is the deity; the invocations of other gods, Brihaspati, Surya, the Ribhus, Usha etc. close the Mandala. A whole book, the ninth, is given to a single god, Soma. The first, eighth and tenth Mandalas are collections of Suktas by various Rishis, but the hymns of each seer are ordinarily placed together in the order of their deities, Agni leading, Indra following, the other gods succeeding. Thus the first Mandala opens with ten hymns of the seer Madhuchchhandas, son of Vishwamitra, and an eleventh ascribed to Jetri, son of Madhuchchhandas. This last Sukta, however, is identical in style, manner and spirit with the ten that precede it and they can all be taken together as a single block of hymns one in intention and diction.

A certain principle of thought-development also has not been absent from the arrangement of these Vedic hymns. The opening Mandala seems to have been so designed that the general thought of the Veda in its various elements should gradually unroll itself under the cover of the established symbols by the voices of a certain number of Rishis who almost all rank high as thinkers and sacred singers and are, some of them, among the most famous names of Vedic tradition. Nor can it be by accident that the tenth or closing Mandala gives us, with an even greater miscellaneity of authors, the last developments of the thought of the Veda and some of the most modern in language of its Suktas. It is here that we find the Sacrifice of the Purusha and the great Hymn of the Creation. It is here also that modern scholars think they discover the first origins of the Vedantic philosophy, the Brahmavada.

In any case, the hymns of the son and grandson of Vishwamitra with which the Rig Veda opens strike admirably the first essential notes of the Vedic harmony. The first hymn, addressed to Agni, suggests the central conception of the Truth which is confirmed in the second and third Suktas invoking Indra in company with other gods. In the remaining eight hymns with Indra as the sole deity, except for one which he shares with the Maruts,

we find the symbols of the Soma and the Cow, the obstructor Vritra and the great role played by Indra in leading man to the Light and overthrowing the barriers to his progress. These hymns are therefore of crucial importance to the psychological interpretation of the Veda.

There are four verses in the Hymn to Agni, the fifth to the eighth, in which the psychological sense comes out with a great force and clearness, escaping from the veil of the symbol.

Agnir hotā kavikratuḥ, satyaś citraśravastamaḥ;
devo devebhir ā gamat.
Yad aṅga dāśuṣe tvam, agne bhadraṁ kariṣyasi;
tavet tat satyam aṅgiraḥ.
Upa tvāgne dive dive, doṣāvastar dhiyā vayam;
namo bharanta emasi.
Rājantam adhvarāṇāṁ, gopām ṛtasya dīdivim;
vardhamānaṁ sve dame.

In this passage we have a series of terms plainly bearing or obviously capable of a psychological sense and giving their colour to the whole context. Sayana, however, insists on a purely ritual interpretation and it is interesting to see how he arrives at it. In the first phrase we have the word *kavi* meaning a seer and, even if we take *kratu* to mean work of the sacrifice, we shall have as a result, "Agni, the priest whose work or rite is that of the seer", a turn which at once gives a symbolic character to the sacrifice and is in itself sufficient to serve as the seed of a deeper understanding of the Veda. Sayana feels that he has to turn the difficulty at any cost and therefore he gets rid of the sense of seer for *kavi* and gives it another and unusual significance. He then explains that Agni is *satya*, true, because he brings about the true fruit of the sacrifice. *Śravas* Sayana renders "fame", Agni has an exceedingly various renown. It would have been surely better to take the word in the sense of wealth so as to avoid the incoherency of this last rendering. We shall then have this result for the fifth verse, "Agni the priest, active in the ritual, who is true (in its fruit) — for his is the most varied wealth, — let him come, a god with the gods."

To the sixth Rik the commentator gives a very awkward and abrupt construction and trivial turn of thought which breaks entirely the flow of the verse. "That good (in the shape of varied wealth) which thou shalt effect for the giver, thine is that. This is true, O Angiras," that is to say, there can be no doubt about this fact, for if Agni does good to the giver by providing him with wealth, he in turn will perform fresh sacrifices to Agni, and thus the good of the sacrificer becomes the good of the god. Here again it would be better to render, "The good that thou wilt do for the giver, that is that truth of thee, O Angiras," for we thus get at once a simpler sense and construction and an explanation of the epithet, *satya*, true, as applied to the god of the sacrificial fire. This is the truth of Agni that to the giver of the sacrifice he surely gives good in return.

The seventh verse offers no difficulty to the ritualistic interpretation except the curious phrase, "we come *bearing* the prostration." Sayana explains that bearing here means simply doing and he renders, "To thee day by day we, by night and by day, come with the thought performing the prostration." In the eighth verse he takes *ṛtasya* in the sense of truth and explains it as the true fruit of the ritual. "To thee shining, the protector of the sacrifices, manifesting always their truth (that is, their inevitable fruit), increasing in thy own house." Again, it would be simpler and better to take *ṛtam* in the sense of sacrifice and to render, "To thee shining out in the sacrifices, protector of the rite, ever luminous, increasing in thy own house." The "own house" of Agni, says the commentator, is the place of sacrifice and this is indeed called frequently enough in Sanskrit, "the house of Agni".

We see, therefore, that with a little managing we can work out a purely ritual sense quite empty of thought even for a passage which at first sight offers a considerable wealth of psychological significance. Nevertheless, however ingeniously it is effected, flaws and cracks remain which betray the artificiality of the work. We have had to throw overboard the plain sense of *kavi* which adheres to it throughout the Veda and foist in an unreal rendering. We have either to divorce the two words

satya and *ṛta* which are closely associated in the Veda or to give a forced sense to *ṛta*. And throughout we have avoided the natural suggestions pressed on us by the language of the Rishi.

Let us now follow instead the opposite principle and give their full psychological value to the words of the inspired text. *Kratu* means in Sanskrit work or action and especially work in the sense of the sacrifice; but it means also power or strength (the Greek *kratos*) effective of action. Psychologically this power effective of action is the will. The word may also mean mind or intellect and Sayana admits thought or knowledge as a possible sense for *kratu*. *Śravas* means literally hearing and from this primary significance is derived its secondary sense, "fame". But, psychologically, the idea of hearing leads up in Sanskrit to another sense which we find in *śravaṇa*, *śruti*, *śruta*, — revealed knowledge, the knowledge which comes by inspiration. *Dṛṣṭi* and *śruti*, sight and hearing, revelation and inspiration are the two chief powers of that supra-mental faculty which belongs to the old Vedic idea of the Truth, the Ritam. The word *śravas* is not recognised by the lexicographers in this sense, but it is accepted in the sense of a hymn, — the inspired word of the Veda. This indicates clearly that at one time it conveyed the idea of inspiration or of something inspired, whether word or knowledge. This significance, then, we are entitled to give it, provisionally at least, in the present passage; for the other sense of fame is entirely incoherent and meaningless in the context. Again the word *namas* is also capable of a psychological sense; for it means literally "bending down" and is applied to the act of adoring submission to the deity rendered physically by the prostration of the body. When therefore the Rishi speaks of "bearing obeisance to Agni by the thought" we can hardly doubt that he gives to *namas* the psychological sense of the inward prostration, the act of submission or surrender to the deity.

We get then this rendering of the four verses: —

"May Agni, priest of the offering whose will towards action is that of the seer, who is true, most rich in varied inspiration, come, a god with the gods.

"The good that thou wilt create for the giver, that is that truth of thee, O Angiras.

"To thee day by day, O Agni, in the night and in the light we by the thought come bearing our submission, —

"To thee who shinest out from the sacrifices (or, who governest the sacrifices), guardian of the Truth and its illumination, increasing in thy own home."

The defect of the translation is that we have had to employ one and the same word for *satyam* and *ṛtam* whereas, as we see in the formula *satyam ṛtaṁ bṛhat*, there was a distinction in the Vedic mind between the precise significances of the two words.

Who, then, is this god Agni to whom language of so mystic a fervour is addressed, to whom functions so vast and profound are ascribed? Who is this guardian of the Truth, who is in his act its illumination, whose will in the act is the will of a seer possessed of a divine wisdom governing his richly varied inspiration? What is the Truth that he guards? And what is this good that he creates for the giver who comes always to him in thought day and night bearing as his sacrifice submission and self-surrender? Is it gold and horses and cattle that he brings or is it some diviner riches?

It is not the sacrificial Fire that is capable of these functions, nor can it be any material flame or principle of physical heat and light. Yet throughout the symbol of the sacrificial Fire is maintained. It is evident that we are in the presence of a mystic symbolism to which the fire, the sacrifice, the priest are only outward figures of a deeper teaching and yet figures which it was thought necessary to maintain and to hold constantly in front.

In the early Vedantic teaching of the Upanishads we come across a conception of the Truth which is often expressed by formulas taken from the hymns of the Veda, such as the expression already quoted, *satyam ṛtaṁ bṛhat*, — the truth, the right, the vast. This Truth is spoken of in the Veda as a path leading to felicity, leading to immortality. In the Upanishads also it is by the path of the Truth that the sage or seer, Rishi or Kavi, passes beyond. He passes out of the falsehood, out of the mortal

state into an immortal existence. We have the right therefore to assume that the same conception is in question in both Veda and Vedanta.

This psychological conception is that of a truth which is truth of divine essence, not truth of mortal sensation and appearance. It is *satyam*, truth of being; it is in its action *ṛtam*, right, — truth of divine being regulating right activity both of mind and body; it is *bṛhat*, the universal truth proceeding direct and undeformed out of the Infinite. The consciousness that corresponds to it is also infinite, *bṛhat*, large as opposed to the consciousness of the sense-mind which is founded upon limitation. The one is described as *bhūmā*, the large, the other as *alpa*, the little. Another name for this supramental or truth consciousness is Mahas which also means the great, the vast. And as for the facts of sensation and appearance which are full of falsehoods (*anṛtam*, not-truth or wrong application of the *satyam* in mental and bodily activity), we have for instruments the senses, the sense-mind (*manas*) and the intellect working upon their evidence, so for the truth-consciousness there are corresponding faculties, — *dṛṣṭi*, *śruti*, *viveka*, the direct vision of the truth, the direct hearing of its word, the direct discrimination of the right. Whoever is in possession of this truth-consciousness or open to the action of these faculties, is the Rishi or Kavi, sage or seer. It is these conceptions of the truth, *satyam* and *ṛtam*, that we have to apply in this opening hymn of the Veda.

Agni in the Veda is always presented in the double aspect of force and light. He is the divine power that builds up the worlds, a power which acts always with a perfect knowledge, for it is *jātavedas*, knower of all births, *viśvāni vayunāni vidvān*, — it knows all manifestations or phenomena or it possesses all forms and activities of the divine wisdom. Moreover it is repeatedly said that the gods have established Agni as the immortal in mortals, the divine power in man, the energy of fulfilment through which they do their work in him. It is this work which is symbolised by the sacrifice.

Psychologically, then, we may take Agni to be the divine will perfectly inspired by divine Wisdom, and indeed one with it,

which is the active or effective power of the Truth-consciousness. This is the obvious sense of the word *kavikratuḥ*, he whose active will or power of effectivity is that of the seer, — works, that is to say, with the knowledge which comes by the truth-consciousness and in which there is no misapplication or error. The epithets that follow confirm this interpretation. Agni is *satya*, true in his being; perfect possession of his own truth and the essential truth of things gives him the power to apply it perfectly in all act and movement of force. He has both the *satyam* and the *ṛtam*. Moreover, he is *citraśravastamaḥ*; from the Ritam there proceeds a fullness of richly luminous and varied inspirations which give the capacity for doing the perfect work. For all these are epithets of Agni as the *hotṛ*, the priest of the sacrifice, he who performs the offering. Therefore it is the power of Agni to apply the Truth in the work (*karma* or *apas*) symbolised by the sacrifice, that makes him the object of human invocation. The importance of the sacrificial fire in the outward ritual corresponds to the importance of this inward force of unified Light and Power in the inward rite by which there is communication and interchange between the mortal and the Immortal. Agni is elsewhere frequently described as the envoy, *dūta*, the medium of that communication and interchange.

We see, then, in what capacity Agni is called to the sacrifice. "Let him come, a god with the gods." The emphasis given to the idea of divinity by this repetition, *devo devebhir*, becomes intelligible when we recall the standing description of Agni as the god in human beings, the immortal in mortals, the divine guest. We may give the full psychological sense by translating, "Let him come, a divine power with the divine powers." For in the external sense of the Veda the Gods are universal powers of physical Nature personified; in any inner sense they must be universal powers of Nature in her subjective activities, Will, Mind, etc. But in the Veda there is always a distinction between the ordinary human or mental action of these puissances, *manuṣvat*, and the divine. It is supposed that man by the right use of their mental action in the inner sacrifice to the gods can convert them into their true or divine nature, the mortal can

become immortal. Thus the Ribhus, who were at first human beings or represented human faculties, became divine and immortal powers by perfection in the work, *sukṛtyayā*, *svapasyayā*. It is a continual self-offering of the human to the divine and a continual descent of the divine into the human which seems to be symbolised in the sacrifice.

The state of immortality thus attained is conceived as a state of felicity or bliss founded on a perfect Truth and Right, *satyam ṛtam*. We must, I think, understand in this sense the verse that follows. "The good (happiness) which thou wilt create for the giver, that is that truth of thee, O Agni." In other words, the essence of this truth, which is the nature of Agni, is the freedom from evil, the state of perfect good and happiness which the Ritam carries in itself and which is sure to be created in the mortal when he offers the sacrifice by the action of Agni as the divine priest. *Bhadram* means anything good, auspicious, happy and by itself need not carry any deep significance. But we find it in the Veda used, like *ṛtam*, in a special sense. It is described in one of the hymns (V.82) as the opposite of the evil dream (*duḥṣvapnyam*), the false consciousness of that which is not the Ritam, and of *duritam*, false going, which means all evil and suffering. *Bhadram* is therefore equivalent to *suvitam*, right going, which means all good and felicity belonging to the state of the Truth, the Ritam. It is Mayas, the felicity, and the gods who represent the Truth-consciousness are described as *mayobhuvaḥ*, those who bring or carry in their being the felicity. Thus every part of the Veda, if properly understood, throws light upon every other part. It is only when we are misled by its veils that we find in it an incoherence.

In the next verse there seems to be stated the condition of the effective sacrifice. It is the continual resort day by day, in the night and in the light, of the thought in the human being with submission, adoration, self-surrender, to the divine Will and Wisdom represented by Agni. Night and Day, *Naktoṣāsā*, are also symbolical, like all the other gods in the Veda, and the sense seems to be that in all states of consciousness, whether

illumined or obscure, there must be a constant submission and reference of all activities to the divine control.

For whether by day or night Agni shines out in the sacrifices; he is the guardian of the Truth, of the Ritam in man and defends it from the powers of darkness; he is its constant illumination burning up even in obscure and besieged states of the mind. The ideas thus briefly indicated in the eighth verse are constantly found throughout the hymns to Agni in the Rig Veda.

Agni is finally described as increasing in his own home. We can no longer be satisfied with the explanation of the own home of Agni as the "fire-room" of the Vedic householder. We must seek in the Veda itself for another interpretation and we find it in the 75th hymn of the first Mandala.

Yajā no mitrāvaruṇā, yajā devān ṛtaṁ bṛhat;
agne yakṣi svaṁ damam.

"Sacrifice for us to Mitra and Varuna, sacrifice to the gods, to the Truth, the Vast; O Agni, sacrifice to thy own home."

Here *ṛtaṁ bṛhat* and *svaṁ damam* seem to express the goal of the sacrifice and this is perfectly in consonance with the imagery of the Veda which frequently describes the sacrifice as travelling towards the gods and man himself as a traveller moving towards the truth, the light or the felicity. It is evident, therefore, that the Truth, the Vast and Agni's own home are identical. Agni and other gods are frequently spoken of as being born in the truth, dwelling in the wide or vast. The sense, then, will be in our passage that Agni the divine will and power in man increases in the truth-consciousness, its proper sphere, where false limitations are broken down, *urāv anibādhe*, in the wide and the limitless.

Thus in these four verses of the opening hymn of the Veda we get the first indications of the principal ideas of the Vedic Rishis, — the conception of a Truth-consciousness supramental and divine, the invocation of the gods as powers of the Truth to raise man out of the falsehoods of the mortal mind, the attainment in and by this Truth of an immortal state of perfect good and felicity and the inner sacrifice and offering of what

one has and is by the mortal to the Immortal as the means of the divine consummation. All the rest of Vedic thought in its spiritual aspects is grouped around these central conceptions.

Chapter VII

Varuna-Mitra and the Truth

IF THE idea of the Truth that we have found in the very opening hymn of the Veda really carries in itself the contents we have supposed and amounts to the conception of a supramental consciousness which is the condition of the state of immortality or beatitude and if this be the leading conception of the Vedic Rishis, we are bound to find it recurring throughout the hymns as a centre for other and dependent psychological realisations. In the very next Sukta, the second hymn of Madhuchchhandas addressed to Indra and Vayu, we find another passage full of clear and this time quite invincible psychological suggestions in which the idea of the Ritam is insisted upon with an even greater force than in the hymn to Agni. The passage comprises the last three Riks of the Sukta.

Mitraṁ huve pūtadakṣaṁ, varuṇaṁ ca riśādasam;
dhiyaṁ ghṛtācīṁ sādhantā.
Ṛtena mitrāvaruṇāv, ṛtāvṛdhāv ṛtaspṛśā;
kratuṁ bṛhantam āśāthe.
Kavī no mitrāvaruṇā, tuvijātā urukṣayā;
dakṣaṁ dadhāte apasam.

In the first Rik of this passage we have the word *dakṣa* usually explained by Sayana as strength, but capable of a psychological significance, the important word *ghṛta* in the adjectival form *ghṛtācī* and the remarkable phrase *dhiyaṁ ghṛtācīm*. The verse may be translated literally "I invoke Mitra of purified strength (or, purified discernment) and Varuna destroyer of our foes perfecting (or accomplishing) a bright understanding."

In the second Rik we have Ritam thrice repeated and the words *bṛhat* and *kratu*, to both of which we have attached a considerable importance in the psychological interpretation of the Veda. *Kratu* here may mean either work of sacrifice or effective

power. In favour of the former sense we have a similar passage in the Veda in which Varuna and Mitra are said to attain to or enjoy by the Truth a mighty sacrifice, *yajñaṁ bṛhantam āśāthe*. But this parallel is not conclusive; for while in one expression it is the sacrifice itself that is spoken of, in the other it may be the power or strength which effects the sacrifice. The verse may be translated, literally, "By Truth Mitra and Varuna, truth-increasing, truth-touching, enjoy (or, attain) a mighty work" or "a vast (effective) power."

Finally in the third Rik we have again *dakṣa*; we have the word *kavi*, seer, already associated by Madhuchchhandas with *kratu*, work or will; we have the idea of the Truth, and we have the expression *urukṣaya*, where *uru*, wide or vast, may be an equivalent for *bṛhat*, the vast, which is used to describe the world or plane of the truth-consciousness, the "own home" of Agni. I translate the verse, literally, "For us Mitra and Varuna, seers, multiply-born, wide-housed, uphold the strength (or, discernment) that does the work."

It will at once be evident that we have in this passage of the second hymn precisely the same order of ideas and many of the same expressions as those on which we founded ourselves in the first Sukta. But the application is different and the conceptions of the purified discernment, the richly-bright understanding, *dhiyaṁ ghṛtācīm*, and the action of the Truth in the work of the sacrifice, *apas*, introduce certain fresh precisions which throw further light on the central ideas of the Rishis.

The word *dakṣa*, which alone in this passage admits of some real doubt as to its sense, is usually rendered by Sayana strength. It comes from a root which, like most of its congeners, e.g. *daś*, *diś*, *dah*, suggested originally as one of its characteristic significances an aggressive pressure and hence any form of injury, but especially dividing, cutting, crushing or sometimes burning. Many of the words for strength had originally this idea of a force for injury, the aggressive strength of the fighter and slayer, the kind of force most highly prized by primitive man making a place for himself by violence on the earth he had come to inherit. We see this connection in the ordinary Sanskrit word for

strength, *balam*, which is of the same family as the Greek *ballō*, I strike, and *belos*, a weapon. The sense, strength, for *dakṣa* has the same origin.

But this idea of division led up also in the psychology of language-development to quite another order of ideas, for when man wished to have words for mental conceptions, his readiest method was to apply the figures of physical action to the mental movement. The idea of physical division or separation was thus used and converted into that of distinction. It seems to have been first applied to distinguishing by the ocular sense and then to the act of mental separation, — discernment, judgment. Thus the root *vid*, which means in Sanskrit to find or know, signifies in Greek and Latin to see. *Dṛś*, to see, meant originally to rend, tear apart, separate; *paś*, to see, has a similar origin. We have three almost identical roots which are very instructive in this respect, — *pis*, to hurt, injure, be strong; *piṣ*, to hurt, injure, be strong, crush, pound; and *piś*, to form, shape, organise, be reduced to the constituent parts, — all these senses betraying the original idea of separation, division, cutting apart, — with derivatives, *piśāca*, a devil, and *piśuna*, which means on one side harsh, cruel, wicked, treacherous, slanderous, all from the idea of injury, and at the same time "indicatory, manifesting, displaying, making clear" from the other sense of distinction. So *kṝ*, to injure, divide, scatter appears in Greek *krinō*, I sift, choose, judge, determine. *Dakṣa* has a similar history. It is kin to the root *daś* which in Latin gives us *doceo*, I teach and in Greek *dokeō*, I think, judge, reckon, and *dokazō*, I observe, am of opinion. So also we have the kindred root *diś* meaning to point out or teach, Greek *deiknumi*. Almost identical with *dakṣa* itself is the Greek *doxa*, opinion, judgment, and *dexios*, clever, dexterous, right-hand. In Sanskrit the root *dakṣ* means to hurt, kill and also to be competent, able, the adjective *dakṣa* means clever, skilful, competent, fit, careful, attentive; *dakṣiṇa* means clever, skilful, right-hand, like *dexios*, and the noun *dakṣa* means, besides strength and also wickedness from the sense of hurting, mental ability or fitness like other words of the family. We may compare also the word *daśā* in the sense of

mind, understanding. All this evidence taken together seems to indicate clearly enough that *dakṣa* must have meant at one time discernment, judgment, discriminative thought-power and that its sense of mental capacity is derived from this sense of mental division and not by transference of the idea of physical strength to power of mind.

We have therefore three possible senses for *dakṣa* in the Veda, strength generally, mental power or especially the power of judgment, discernment. *Dakṣa* is continually associated with *kratu*; the Rishis aspire to them together, *dakṣāya kratve*, which may mean simply, "capacity and effective power" or "will and discernment". Continually we find the word occurring in passages where the whole context relates to mental activities. Finally, we have the goddess Dakshina who may well be a female form of Daksha, himself a god and afterwards in the Purana one of the Prajapatis, the original progenitors, — we have Dakshina associated with the manifestation of knowledge and sometimes almost identified with Usha, the divine Dawn, who is the bringer of illumination. I shall suggest that Dakshina like the more famous Ila, Saraswati and Sarama, is one of four goddesses representing the four faculties of the Ritam or Truth-consciousness, — Ila representing truth-vision or revelation, Saraswati truth-audition, inspiration, the divine word, Sarama intuition, Dakshina the separative intuitional discrimination. Daksha then will mean this discrimination whether as mental judgment on the mind-plane or as intuitional discernment on the plane of the Ritam.

The three riks with which we are dealing occur as the closing passage of a hymn of which the first three verses are addressed to Vayu alone and the next three to Indra and Vayu. Indra in the psychological interpretation of the hymns represents, as we shall see, Mind-Power. The word for the sense-faculties, *indriya*, is derived from his name. His special realm is Swar, a word which means sun or luminous, being akin to *sūra* and *sūrya*, the sun, and is used to indicate the third of the Vedic *vyāhṛtis* and the third of the Vedic worlds corresponding to the principle of the pure or unobscured Mind. Surya represents the illumination

of the Ritam rising upon the mind; Swar is that plane of mental consciousness which directly receives the illumination. Vayu on the other hand is always associated with the Prana or Life-Energy which contributes to the system all the ensemble of those nervous activities that in man are the support of the mental energies governed by Indra. Their combination constitutes the normal mentality of man. These two gods are invited in the hymn to come and partake together of the Soma-wine. This wine of Soma represents, as we have abundant proof in the Veda and especially in the ninth book, a collection of more than a hundred hymns addressed to the deity Soma, the intoxication of the Ananda, the divine delight of being, inflowing upon the mind from the supramental consciousness through the Ritam or Truth. If we accept these interpretations, we can easily translate the hymn into its psychological significance.

Indra and Vayu awaken in consciousness (*cetathaḥ*) to the flowings of the Soma-wine; that is to say, the mind-power and life-power working together in human mentality are to awaken to the inflowings of this Ananda, this Amrita, this delight and immortality from above. They receive them into the full plenitude of the mental and nervous energies, *cetathaḥ sutānāṁ vājinīvasū*.[1] The Ananda thus received constitutes a new action preparing immortal consciousness in the mortal and Indra and Vayu are bidden to come and swiftly perfect these new workings by the participation of the thought, *ā yātam upa niṣkṛtaṁ makṣū dhiyā*.[2] For *dhī* is the thought-power, intellect or understanding. It is intermediate between the normal mentality represented by the combination of Indra and Vayu and the Ritam or truth-consciousness.

It is at this point that Varuna and Mitra intervene and our passage begins. Without the psychological clue the connection between the first part of the hymn and the close is not very clear, nor the relation between the couple Varuna-Mitra and the couple Indra-Vayu. With that clue both connections become obvious;

[1] V. 5.
[2] V. 6.

indeed they depend upon each other. For the earlier part of the hymn has for its subject the preparation first of the vital forces represented by Vayu who is alone invoked in the three opening Riks, then of the mentality represented by the couple Indra-Vayu for the activities of the Truth-consciousness in the human being; the close has for its subject the working of the Truth on the mentality so as to perfect the intellect and to enlarge the action. Varuna and Mitra are two of the four gods who represent this working of the Truth in the human mind and temperament.

In the style of the Veda when there is a transition of this kind from one movement of thought to another developing out of it, the link of connection is often indicated by the repetition in the new movement of an important word which has already occurred in the close of the movement that precedes. This principle of suggestion by echo, as one may term it, pervades the hymns and is a mannerism common to all the Rishis. The connecting word here is *dhī*, thought or intellect. *Dhī* differs from the more general word, *mati*, which means mentality or mental action generally and which indicates sometimes thought, sometimes feeling, sometimes the whole mental state. *Dhī* is the thought-mind or intellect; as understanding it holds all that comes to it, defines everything and puts it into the right place,[3] or often *dhī* indicates the activity of the intellect, particular thought or thoughts. It is by the thought that Indra and Vayu have been called upon to perfect the nervous mentality, *niṣkṛtaṁ dhiyā*. But this instrument, thought, has itself to be perfected, enriched, clarified before the mind can become capable of free communication with the Truth-consciousness. Therefore Varuna and Mitra, Powers of the Truth, are invoked "accomplishing a richly luminous thought," *dhiyaṁ ghṛtācīṁ sādhantā*.

This is the first occurrence in the Veda of the word *ghṛta*, in a modified adjectival form, and it is significant that it should occur as an epithet of the Vedic word for the intellect, *dhī*. In other passages also we find it continually in connection with the words *manas*, *manīṣā* or in a context where some activity of thought is

[3] The root *dhī* means to hold or to place.

indicated. The root *ghṛ* conveys the idea of a strong brightness or heat such as that of fire or the summer sun. It means also to sprinkle or anoint, Greek *chriō*. It is capable of being used to signify any liquid, but especially a bright, thick liquid. It is the ambiguity of these two possible senses of which the Vedic Rishis took advantage to indicate by the word outwardly the clarified butter in the sacrifice, inwardly a rich and bright state or activity of the brain-power, *medhā*, as basis and substance of illuminated thought. By *dhiyaṁ ghṛtācīm* is meant, therefore, the intellect full of a rich and bright mental activity.

Varuna and Mitra who accomplish or perfect this state of the intellect, are distinguished by two several epithets. Mitra is *pūtadakṣa*, possessed of a purified judgment; Varuna is *riśādas*, he destroys all hurters or enemies. In the Veda there are no merely ornamental epithets. Every word is meant to tell, to add something to the sense and bear a strict relation to the thought of the sentence in which it occurs. There are two obstacles which prevent the intellect from being a perfect and luminous mirror of the truth-consciousness; first, impurity of the discernment or discriminative faculty which leads to confusion of the Truth, secondly the many causes or influences which interfere with the growth of the Truth by limiting its full application or by breaking up the connections and harmony of the thoughts that express it and which thus bring about poverty and falsification of its contents. Just as the Gods in the Veda represent universal powers descended from the Truth-consciousness which build up the harmony of the worlds and in man his progressive perfection, so the influences that work against these objects are represented by hostile agencies, Dasyus and Vritras, who seek to break up, to limit, to withhold and deny. Varuna in the Veda is always characterised as a power of wideness and purity; when, therefore, he is present in man as a conscious force of the Truth, all that limits and hurts the nature by introducing into it fault, sin and evil is destroyed by contact with him. He is *riśādas*, destroyer of the enemy, of all that seek to injure the growth. Mitra, a power like Varuna of Light and Truth, especially represents Love, Joy and Harmony, the foundations of Mayas, the Vedic beatitude.

Working with the purity of Varuna and imparting that purity to the discernment, he enables it to get rid of all discords and confusions and establish the right working of the strong and luminous intellect.

This progress enables the Truth-consciousness, the Ritam, to work in the human mentality. With the Ritam as the agency, *ṛtena*, increasing the action of the Truth in man, *ṛtāvṛdhā*, touching or reaching the Truth, enabling, that is to say, the mental consciousness to come into successful contact with and possession of the Truth-consciousness, *ṛtaspṛśā*, Mitra and Varuna are able to enjoy the use of a vast effective will-power, *kratuṁ bṛhantam āśāthe*. For it is the Will that is the chief effective agent of the inner sacrifice, but a will that is in harmony with the Truth, guided therefore by a purified discernment. The Will as it enters more and more into the wideness of the Truth-consciousness becomes itself wide and vast, free from limitation in its view and of hampering impediments in its effectivity. It works *urāv anibādhe*, in the wideness where there is no obstacle or wall of limitation.

Thus the two requisites on which the Vedic Rishis always insist are secured, Light and Power, the Light of the Truth working in the knowledge, *dhiyaṁ ghṛtācīm*, the Power of the Truth working in the effective and enlightened Will, *kratuṁ bṛhantam*. As a result Varuna and Mitra are shown to us in the closing verse of the hymn working in the full sense of their Truth, *kavī tuvijātā urukṣayā*. *Kavi*, we have seen, means possessed of the Truth-consciousness and using its faculties of vision, inspiration, intuition, discrimination. *Tuvijāta* is "multiply born", for *tuvi*, meaning originally strength or force, is used like the French word "force" in the sense of many. But by the birth of the gods is meant always in the Veda their manifestation; thus *tuvijātā* signifies "manifested multiply", in many forms and activities. *Urukṣaya* means dwelling in the wideness, an idea which occurs frequently in the hymns; *uru* is equivalent to *bṛhat*, the Vast, and indicates the infinite freedom of the Truth-consciousness. Thus we have as the result of the increasing activities of the Ritam the manifestation in the human being of the Powers of wideness

and purity, of joy and harmony, a manifestation rich in forms, seated in the wideness of the Ritam and using the faculties of the supra-mental consciousness.

This manifestation of the Powers of the Truth upholds or confirms the discernment while it does the work, *dakṣaṁ dadhāte apasam*. The discernment, now purified and supported, works in the sense of the Truth, as a power of the Truth and accomplishes the perfection of the activities of Indra and Vayu by freeing the thought and the will from all defect and confusion in their working and results.

To confirm the interpretation we have put on the terms of this passage we may quote a Rik from the tenth Sukta of the fourth Mandala.

Adhā hyagne krator bhadrasya dakṣasya sādhoḥ,
rathīr ṛtasya bṛhato babhūtha.

"Then indeed, O Agni, thou becomest the charioteer of the happy will, the perfecting discernment, the Truth that is the Vast." We have here the same idea as in the first hymn of the first Mandala, the effective will that is the nature of the Truth-consciousness, *kavikratuḥ*, and works out therefore in a state of beatitude the good, *bhadram*. We have in the phrase *dakṣasya sādhoḥ* at once a variant and explanation of the last phrase of the second hymn, *dakṣam apasam*, the discernment perfecting and accomplishing the inner work in man. We have the vast Truth as the consummation of these two activities of power and knowledge, Will and Discernment, *kratu* and *dakṣa*. Always the hymns of the Veda confirm each other by this reproduction of the same terms and ideas and the same relation of ideas. This would not be possible unless they were based on a coherent doctrine with a precise significance for standing terms such as *kavi*, *kratu*, *dakṣa*, *bhadram*, *ṛtam*, etc. The internal evidence of the Riks themselves establishes that this significance is psychological, as otherwise the terms lose their fixed value, their precise sense, their necessary connection, and their constant recurrence in relation to each other has to be regarded as fortuitous and void of reason or purpose.

We see then that in the second hymn we find again the same governing ideas as in the first. All is based on the central Vedic conception of the supra-mental or Truth-consciousness towards which the progressively perfected mentality of the human being labours as towards a consummation and a goal. In the first hymn this is merely stated as the aim of the sacrifice and the characteristic work of Agni. The second hymn indicates the preliminary work of preparation, by Indra and Vayu, by Mitra and Varuna, of the ordinary mentality of man through the force of the Ananda and the increasing growth of the Truth.

We shall find that the whole of the Rig Veda is practically a constant variation on this double theme, the preparation of the human being in mind and body and the fulfilment of the godhead or immortality in him by his attainment and development of the Truth and the Beatitude.

Chapter VIII

The Ashwins — Indra — the Vishwadevas

THE THIRD hymn of Madhuchchhandas is again a hymn of the Soma sacrifice. It is composed, like the second before it, in movements of three stanzas, the first addressed to the Ashwins, the second to Indra, the third to the Vishwadevas, the fourth to the goddess Saraswati. In this hymn also we have in the closing movement, in the invocation to Saraswati, a passage of clear psychological significance, of a far greater clarity indeed than those that have already helped us to understand the secret thought of the Veda.

But this whole hymn is full of psychological suggestions and we find in it the close connection and even identity which the Vedic Rishis sought to establish and perfect between the three main interests of the human soul, Thought and its final victorious illuminations, Action and its last supreme all-achieving puissances, Enjoyment and its highest spiritual ecstasies. The Soma wine symbolises the replacing of our ordinary sense-enjoyment by the divine Ananda. That substitution is brought about by divinising our thought-action, and as it progresses it helps in its turn the consummation of the movement which has brought it about. The Cow, the Horse, the Soma-Wine are the figures of this triple sacrifice. The offering of *ghṛta*, the clarified butter which is the yield of the cow, the offering of the horse, *aśvamedha*, the offering of the wine of Soma are its three principal forms or elements. We have also, less prominent, the offering of the cake which is possibly symbolic of the body, of Matter.

We commence with an invocation of the two Ashwins, the two Riders on the Horse, Castor and Polydeuces of the old Mediterranean mythology. They are supposed by the comparative mythologists to represent twin stars in the heavens which

for some reason had a better fortune than the rest of the celestial host and attracted the special adoration of the Aryans. Let us, however, see how they are described in the hymn we are studying. They are first described as "Ashwins, swift-footed lords of bliss, much-enjoying, — *dravatpāṇī śubhaspatī purubhujā*". The word *śubh*, like the words *ratna* and *candra*, is capable of signifying either light or enjoyment; but in this passage it occurs in connection with the adjective *purubhujā*, "much-enjoying", and the verb *canasyatam*, "take delight", and must therefore be taken in the sense of weal or bliss.

Next, these twin gods are described as "Ashwins, divine souls many-actioned, thought-holding" who accept and rejoice in the words of the Mantra "with an energetic thought", — *purudaṁsasā narā śavīrayā dhiyā dhiṣṇyā*. *Nṛ* in the Veda is applicable both to gods and men and does not mean simply a man; it meant originally, I think, strong or active and then a male and is applied to the male gods, active divine souls or powers, *puruṣas*, opposed to the female deities, *gnāḥ* who are their energies. It still preserved in the minds of the Rishis much of its original sense, as we see from the word *nṛmṇa*, strength, and the phrase *nṛtama nṛṇām*, strongest of the divine powers. *Śavas* and its adjective *śavīra* give the idea of energy, but always with an association of the farther idea of flame or light; *śavīra* is therefore a very appropriate epithet for *dhī*, thought full of a shining or flashing energy. *Dhiṣṇyā* is connected with *dhiṣaṇā*, intellect or understanding, and is rendered by Sayana "intellectual", *buddhimantau*.

Again the Ashwins are described as "effectual in action, powers of the movement, fierce-moving in their paths," *dasrā nāsatyā rudravartanī*. The Vedic epithets *dasra* and *dasma* are rendered by Sayana indifferently "destroying" or "beautiful" or "bountiful" according to his caprice or convenience. I connect it with the root *das* not in the sense of cutting, dividing, from which it gets the two significances of destroying and giving, not in the sense of "discerning, seeing" from which it gets Sayana's significance "beautiful", *darśanīya*, but in the sense of doing, acting, shaping, accomplishing, as in *purudaṁsasā* in the second

Rik. *Nāsatya* is supposed by some to be a patronymic; the old grammarians ingeniously fabricated for it the sense of "true, not false"; but I take it from *nas* to move. We must remember that the Ashwins are riders on the horse, that they are described often by epithets of motion, "swift-footed", "fierce-moving in their paths"; that Castor and Pollux in Graeco-Latin mythology protect sailors in their voyages and save them in storm and shipwreck and that in the Rig Veda also they are represented as powers that carry over the Rishis as in a ship or save them from drowning in the ocean. *Nāsatyā* may therefore very well mean lords of the voyage, journey, or powers of the movement. *Rudravartani* is rendered by modern scholars "red-pathed", an epithet supposed to be well-suited to stars and they instance the parallel phrase, *hiraṇyavartani*, having a golden or shining path. Certainly, *rudra* must have meant at one time, "shining, deep-coloured, red" like the roots *ruṣ* and *ruś*, *rudhira*, "blood", "red", the Latin *ruber*, *rutilus*, *rufus*, all meaning red. *Rodasī*, the dual Vedic word for heaven and earth, meant probably, like *rajas* and *rocana*, other Vedic words for the heavenly and earthly worlds, "the shining". On the other hand the sense of injury and violence is equally inherent in this family of words and is almost universal in the various roots which form it. "Fierce" or "violent" is therefore likely to be as good a sense for *rudra* as "red". The Ashwins are both *hiraṇyavartanī* and *rudravartanī*, because they are both powers of Light and of nervous force; in the former aspect they have a bright gold movement, in the latter they are violent in their movement. In one hymn (V.75.3) we have the combination *rudrā hiraṇyavartanī*, violent and moving in the paths of light; we can hardly with any respect for coherence of sense understand it to mean that the stars are red but their movement or their path is golden.

Here then, in these three verses, are an extraordinary series of psychological functions to apply to two stars of a heavenly constellation! It is evident that if this was the physical origin of the Ashwins, they have as in Greek mythology long lost their purely stellar nature; they have acquired like Athene, goddess of dawn, a psychological character and functions. They are riders

on the horse, the Ashwa, symbolic of force and especially of life-energy and nervous force, the Prana. Their common character is that they are gods of enjoyment, seekers of honey; they are physicians, they bring back youth to the old, health to the sick, wholeness to the maimed. Another characteristic is movement, swift, violent, irresistible; their rapid and indomitable chariot is a constant object of celebration and they are described here as swift-footed and violent in their paths. They are like birds in their swiftness, like the mind, like the wind (V.77.3 and 78.1). They bring in their chariot ripe or perfected satisfactions to man, they are creators of bliss, Mayas. These indications are perfectly clear. They show that the Ashwins are twin divine powers whose special function is to perfect the nervous or vital being in man in the sense of action and enjoyment. But they are also powers of Truth, of intelligent action, of right enjoyment. They are powers that appear with the Dawn, effective powers of action born out of the ocean of being who, because they are divine, are able to mentalise securely the felicities of the higher existence by a thought-faculty which finds or comes to know that true substance and true wealth: —

Yā dasrā sindhumātarā, manotarā rayīṇām;
dhiyā devā vasuvidā. (I.46.2)

They give that impelling energy for the great work which, having for its nature and substance the light of the Truth, carries man beyond the darkness: —

Yā naḥ pīparad aśvinā, jyotiṣmatī tamas tiraḥ;
tām asme rāsāthām iṣam. (I.46.6)

They carry man in their ship to the other shore beyond the thoughts and states of the human mind, that is to say, to the supramental consciousness, — *nāvā matīnāṁ pārāya* (I.46.7). Suryā, daughter of the Sun, Lord of the Truth, mounts their car as their bride.

In the present hymn the Ashwins are invoked, as swift-moving lords of bliss who carry with them many enjoyments, to take delight in the impelling energies of the sacrifice, — *yajvarīr*

iṣo . . . canasyatam. These impelling forces are born evidently of the drinking of the Soma wine, that is to say, of the inflow of the divine Ananda. For the expressive words, *giraḥ*, that are to make new formations in the consciousness are already rising, the seat of the sacrifice has been piled, the vigorous juices of the Soma wine are pressed out.[1] The Ashwins are to come as effective powers of action, *purudaṁsasā narā*, to take delight in the Words and to accept them into the intellect where they shall be retained for the action by a thought full of luminous energy.[2] They are to come to the offering of the Soma wine, in order to effect the action of the sacrifice, *dasrā*, as fulfillers of action, by giving to the delight of the action that violent movement of theirs, *rudravartanī*, which carries them irresistibly on their path and overcomes all opposition. They come as powers of the Aryan journey, lords of the great human movement, *Nāsatyā*. We see throughout that it is energy which these Riders on the Horse are to give; they are to take delight in the sacrificial energies, to take up the word into an energetic thought, to bring to the sacrifice their own violent movement on the path. And it is effectiveness of action and swiftness in the great journey that is the object of this demand for energy. I would call the attention of the reader continually to the consistency of conception and coherence of structure, the easy clearness and precision of outline which the thought of the Rishis assumes by a psychological interpretation, so different from the tangled confusion and incoherent abruptness of the interpretations which ignore the supreme tradition of the Veda as a book of wisdom and deepest knowledge.

We have then this rendering for the first three verses:

"O Riders of the Steed, swift-footed, much-enjoying lords of bliss, take delight in the energies of the sacrifice.

"O Riders of the Steed, male souls effecting a manifold action, take joy of the words, O holders in the intellect, by a luminously energetic thought.

"I have piled the seat of sacrifice, I have pressed out the

1 *Yuvākavaḥ sutā vṛktabarhiṣaḥ.*
2 *Śavīrayā dhiyā dhiṣṇyā vanataṁ giraḥ.*

vigorous Soma juices; fulfillers of action, powers of the movement, come to them with your fierce speed on the path."

As in the second hymn, so in the third the Rishi begins by invoking deities who act in the nervous or vital forces. But there he called Vayu who supplies the vital forces, brings his steeds of life; here he calls the Ashwins who use the vital forces, ride on the steed. As in the second hymn he proceeds from the vital or nervous action to the mental, he invokes in his second movement the might of Indra. The out-pressings of the wine of delight desire him, *sutā ime tvāyavaḥ*; they desire the luminous mind to take possession of them for its activities; they are purified, *aṇvībhis tanā*, "by the fingers and the body" as Sayana explains it, by the subtle thought-powers of the pure mind and by extension in the physical consciousness as it seems to me to mean. For these "ten fingers", if they are fingers at all, are the ten fingers of Suryā, daughter of the Sun, bride of the Ashwins. In the first hymn of the ninth Mandala this same Rishi Madhuchchhandas expands the idea which here he passes over so succinctly. He says, addressing the deity Soma, "The daughter of the Sun purifies thy Soma as it flows abroad in her straining-vessel by a continuous extension", *vāreṇa śaśvatā tanā*. And immediately he adds, "The subtle ones seize it in their labour (or, in the great work, struggle, aspiration, *samarye*), the ten Brides, sisters in the heaven that has to be crossed", a phrase that recalls at once the ship of the Ashwins that carries us over beyond the thoughts; for Heaven is the symbol of the pure mental consciousness in the Veda as is Earth of the physical consciousness. These sisters who dwell in the pure mind, the subtle ones, *aṇvīḥ*, the ten brides, *daśa yoṣaṇaḥ*, are elsewhere called the ten Casters, *daśa kṣipaḥ*, because they seize the Soma and speed it on its way. They are probably identical with the ten Rays, *daśa gāvaḥ*, sometimes spoken of in the Veda. They seem to be described as the grandchildren or descendants of the Sun, *naptībhir vivasvataḥ* (IX.14.5). They are aided in the task of purification by the seven forms of Thought-consciousness, *sapta dhītayaḥ*. Again we are told that "Soma advances, heroic with his swift chariots, by the force of the subtle thought, *dhiyā aṇvyā*, to the perfected activity

(or perfected field) of Indra and takes many forms of thought to arrive at that vast extension (or, formation) of the godhead where the Immortals are" (IX.15.1, 2).

Eṣa purū dhiyāyate, bṛhate devatātaye;
yatrāmṛtāsa āsate.

I have dwelt on this point in order to show how entirely symbolical is the Soma-wine of the Vedic Rishis and how richly surrounded with psychological conceptions, — as anyone will find who cares to go through the ninth Mandala with its almost overcharged splendour of symbolic imagery and overflowing psychological suggestions.

However that may be, the important point here is not the Soma and its purification but the psychological function of Indra. He is addressed as Indra of the richly-various lustres, *indra citrabhāno*. The Soma-juices desire him. He comes impelled by the thought, driven forward by the illumined thinker within, *dhiyeṣito viprajūtaḥ*, to the soul-thoughts of the Rishi who has pressed out the wine of delight and seeks to manifest them in speech, in the inspired mantras; *sutāvata upa brahmāṇi vāghataḥ*. He comes with the speed and force of the illumined mind-power, in possession of his brilliant horses to those thoughts, *tūtujāna upa brahmāṇi harivaḥ*, and the Rishi prays to him to confirm or hold the delight in the Soma offering, *sute dadhiṣva naś canaḥ*. The Ashwins have brought and energised the pleasure of the vital system in the action of the Ananda. Indra is necessary to hold that pleasure firmly in the illuminated mind so that it may not fall away from the consciousness.

"Come, O Indra, with thy rich lustres, these Soma-juices desire thee; they are purified by the subtle powers and by extension in body.

"Come, O Indra, impelled by the mind, driven forward by the illumined thinker, to my soul-thoughts, I who have poured out the Soma-juice and seek to express them in speech.

"Come, O Indra, with forceful speed to my soul-thoughts, O lord of the bright horses; hold firm the delight in the Soma-juice."

The Rishi next passes to the Vishwadevas, all the gods or the all-gods. It has been disputed whether these Vishwadevas form a class by themselves or are simply the gods in their generality. I take it that the phrase means the universal collectivity of the divine powers; for this sense seems to me best to correspond to the actual expressions of the hymns in which they are invoked. In this hymn they are called for a general action which supports and completes the functions of the Ashwins and Indra. They are to come to the sacrifice in their collectivity and divide among themselves, each evidently for the divine and joyous working of his proper activity, the Soma which the giver of the sacrifice distributes to them; *viśve devāsa ā gata, dāśvāṁso dāśuṣaḥ sutam*. In the next Rik the call is repeated with greater insistence; they are to arrive swiftly, *tūrṇayaḥ*, to the Soma offering or, it may mean, making their way through all the planes of consciousness, "waters", which divide the physical nature of man from their godhead and are full of obstacles to communication between earth and heaven; *apturaḥ sutam ā ganta tūrṇayaḥ*. They are to come like cattle hastening to the stalls of their rest at eveningtide, *usrā iva svasarāṇi*. Thus gladly arriving, they are gladly to accept and cleave to the sacrifice and support it, bearing it up in its journey to its goal, in its ascent to the gods or to the home of the gods, the Truth, the Vast; *medhaṁ juṣanta vahnayaḥ*.

And the epithets of the Vishwadevas, qualifying their character and the functions for which they are invited to the Soma-offering, have the same generality; they are common to all the gods and applied indifferently to any or all of them throughout the Veda. They are fosterers or increasers of man and upholders of his labour and effort in the work, the sacrifice, — *omāsaś carṣaṇīdhṛto*. Sayana renders these words protectors and sustainers of men. I need not enter here into a full justification of the significances which I prefer to give them; for I have already indicated the philological method which I follow. Sayana himself finds it impossible to attribute always the sense of protection to the words derived from the root *av*, *avas*, *ūti*, *ūma*, etc. which are so common in the hymns, and is obliged to give to the same word in different passages the most diverse and unconnected

significances. Similarly, while it is easy to attribute the sense of "man" to the two kindred words *carṣaṇi* and *kṛṣṭi* when they stand by themselves, this meaning seems unaccountably to disappear in compound forms like *vicarṣaṇi*, *viśvacarṣaṇi*, *viśvakṛṣṭi*. Sayana himself is obliged to render *viśvacarṣaṇi* "all-seeing" and not "all-man" or "all-human". I do not admit the possibility of such abysmal variations in fixed Vedic terms. *Av* can mean to be, have, keep; contain, protect; become, create; foster, increase, thrive, prosper; gladden, be glad; but it is the sense of increasing or fostering which seems to me to prevail in the Veda. *Carṣ* and *kṛṣ* were originally derivate roots from *car* and *kṛ*, both meaning to do, and the sense of laborious action or movement still remains in *kṛṣ*, to drag, to plough. *Carṣaṇi* and *kṛṣṭi* mean therefore effort, laborious action or work or else the doers of such action. They are two among the many words, (*karma*, *apas*, *kāra*, *kīri*, *duvas* etc.), which are used to indicate the Vedic work, the sacrifice, the toil of aspiring humanity, the *arati* of the Aryan.

The fostering or increasing of man in all his substance and possessions, his continual enlargement towards the fullness and richness of the vast Truth-consciousness, the upholding of him in his great struggle and labour, this is the common preoccupation of the Vedic gods. Then, they are *apturaḥ*, they who cross the waters, or as Sayana takes it, they who give the waters. This he understands in the sense of "rain-givers" and it is perfectly true that all the Vedic gods are givers of the rain, the abundance (for *vṛṣṭi*, rain, has both senses) of heaven, sometimes described as the solar waters, *svarvatīr apaḥ*, or waters which carry in them the light of the luminous heaven, *Svar*. But the ocean and the waters in the Veda, as this phrase itself indicates, are the symbol of conscient being in its mass and in its movements. The gods pour the fullness of these waters, especially the upper waters, the waters of heaven, the streams of the Truth, *ṛtasya dhārāḥ*, across all obstacles into the human consciousness. In this sense they are all *apturaḥ*. But man is also described as crossing the waters over to his home in the Truth-consciousness and the gods as carrying him over; it is doubtful whether this may not be the

true sense here, especially as we have the two words *apturaḥ . . . tūrṇayaḥ* close to each other in a connection that may well be significant.

Again the gods are all free from effective assailants, free from the harm of the hurtful or opposing powers and therefore the creative formations of their conscious knowledge, their Maya, move freely, pervasively, attain their right goal, — *asridha ehimāyāso adruhaḥ*. If we take into account the numerous passages of the Veda which indicate the general object of the sacrifice, of the work, of the journey, of the increase of the light and the abundance of the waters to be the attainment of the Truth-consciousness, Ritam, with the resultant Bliss, Mayas, and that these epithets commonly apply to powers of the infinite, integral Truth-consciousness we can see that it is this attainment of the Truth which is indicated in these three verses. The all-gods increase man, they uphold him in the great work, they bring him the abundance of the waters of Swar, the streams of the Truth, they communicate the unassailably integral and pervading action of the Truth-consciousness with its wide formations of knowledge, *māyāḥ*.

I have translated the phrase, *usrā iva svasarāṇi*, in the most external sense possible; but in the Veda even poetical similes are seldom or never employed for mere decoration; they too are utilised to deepen the psychological sense and with a figure of symbolic or double meaning. The word *usra* is always used in the Veda, like *go*, with the double sense of the concrete figure or symbol, the Bull or Cow, and at the same time the psychological indication of the bright or luminous ones, the illumined powers of the Truth in man. It is as such illumined powers that the all-gods have to come and they come to the Soma-juice, *svasarāṇi*, as if to seats or forms of peace or of bliss; for the root *svas*, like *sas* and many others, means both to rest and to enjoy. They are the powers of Truth entering into the outpourings of the Ananda in man as soon as that movement has been prepared by the vital and mental activity of the Ashwins and the pure mental activity of Indra.

"O fosterers who uphold the doer in his work, O all-gods, come and divide the Soma-wine that I distribute.

"O all-gods who bring over to us the Waters, come passing through to my Soma-offerings as illumined powers to your places of bliss.

"O all-gods, you who are not assailed nor come to hurt, free-moving in your forms of knowledge, cleave to my sacrifice as its upbearers."

And, finally, in the last movement of the hymn we have the clear and unmistakable indication of the Truth-consciousness as the goal of the sacrifice, the object of the Soma-offering, the culmination of the work of the Ashwins, Indra and the All-gods in the vitality and in the mind. For these are the three Riks devoted to Saraswati, the divine Word, who represents the stream of inspiration that descends from the Truth-consciousness, and thus limpidly runs their sense:

"May purifying Saraswati with all the plenitude of her forms of plenty, rich in substance by the thought, desire our sacrifice.

"She, the impeller to happy truths, the awakener in consciousness to right mentalisings, Saraswati, upholds the sacrifice.

"Saraswati by the perception awakens in consciousness the great flood (the vast movement of the Ritam) and illumines entirely all the thoughts."

This clear and luminous finale throws back its light on all that has preceded it. It shows the intimate connection between the Vedic sacrifice and a certain state of mind and soul, the interdependence between the offering of the clarified butter and the Soma juice and luminous thought, richness of psychological content, right states of the mind and its awaking and impulsion to truth and light. It reveals the figure of Saraswati as the goddess of the inspiration, of *śruti*. And it establishes the connection between the Vedic rivers and psychological states of mind. The passage is one of those luminous hints which the Rishis have left scattered amidst the deliberate ambiguities of their symbolic style to guide us towards their secret.

Chapter IX

Saraswati and Her Consorts

THE SYMBOLISM of the Veda betrays itself with the greatest clearness in the figure of the goddess Saraswati. In many of the other gods the balance of the internal sense and the external figure is carefully preserved. The veil sometimes becomes transparent or its corners are lifted even for the ordinary hearer of the Word; but it is never entirely removed. One may doubt whether Agni is anything more than the personification of the sacrificial Fire or of the physical principle of Light and Heat in things, or Indra anything more than the god of the sky and the rain or of physical Light, or Vayu anything more than the divinity in the Wind and Air or at most of the physical Life-breath. In the lesser gods the naturalistic interpretation has less ground for confidence; for it is obvious that Varuna is not merely a Vedic Uranus or Neptune, but a god with great and important moral functions; Mitra and Bhaga have the same psychological aspect; the Ribhus who form things by the mind and build up immortality by works can with difficulty be crushed into the Procrustean measure of a naturalistic mythology. Still by imputing a chaotic confusion of ideas to the poets of the Vedic hymns the difficulty can be trampled upon, if not overcome. But Saraswati will submit to no such treatment. She is, plainly and clearly, the goddess of the Word, the goddess of a divine Inspiration.

If that were all, this would not carry us much farther than the obvious fact that the Vedic Rishis were not mere naturalistic barbarians, but had their psychological ideas and were capable of creating mythological symbols which represent not only those obvious operations of physical Nature that interested their agricultural, pastoral and open-air life, but also the inner operations of the mind and soul. If we have to conceive the history of ancient religious thought as a progression from the physical to the

spiritual, from a purely naturalistic to an increasingly ethical and psychological view of Nature and the world and the gods — and this, though by no means certain, is for the present the accepted view,[1] — we must suppose that the Vedic poets were at least already advancing from the physical and naturalistic conception of the Gods to the ethical and the spiritual. But Saraswati is not only the goddess of Inspiration, she is at one and the same time one of the seven rivers of the early Aryan world. The question at once arises, whence came this extraordinary identification? And how does the connection of the two ideas present itself in the Vedic hymns? And there is more; for Saraswati is important not only in herself but by her connections. Before proceeding farther let us cast a rapid and cursory glance at them to see what they can teach us.

The association of a river with the poetical inspiration occurs also in the Greek mythology; but there the Muses are not conceived of as rivers; they are only connected in a not very intelligible fashion with a particular earthly stream. This stream is the river Hippocrene, the fountain of the Horse, and to account for its name we have a legend that it sprang from the hoof of the divine horse Pegasus; for he smote the rock with his hoof and the waters of inspiration gushed out where the mountain had been thus smitten. Was this legend merely a Greek fairy tale or had it any special meaning? And it is evident that if it had any meaning, it must, since it obviously refers to a psychological phenomenon, the birth of the waters of inspiration, have had a psychological meaning; it must have been an attempt to put into concrete figures certain psychological facts. We may note that the word Pegasus, if we transliterate it into the original Aryan phonetics, becomes Pājasa and is obviously connected with the Sanskrit *pājas*, which meant originally force,

[1] I do not think we have any real materials for determining the first origin and primitive history of religious ideas. What the facts really point to is an early teaching at once psychological and naturalistic, that is to say with two faces, of which the first came to be more or less obscured, but never entirely effaced even in the barbarous races, even in races like the tribes of North America. But this teaching, though prehistoric, was anything but primitive.

movement, or sometimes footing. In Greek itself it is connected with *pēgē*, a stream. There is, therefore, in the terms of this legend a constant association with the image of a forceful movement of inspiration. If we turn to Vedic symbols we see that the Ashwa or Horse is an image of the great dynamic force of Life, of the vital and nervous energy, and is constantly coupled with other images that symbolise the consciousness. *Adri*, the hill or rock, is a symbol of formal existence and especially of the physical nature and it is out of this hill or rock that the herds of the Sun are released and the waters flow. The streams of the *madhu*, the honey, the Soma, are said also to be milked out of this Hill or Rock. The stroke of the Horse's hoof on the rock releasing the waters of inspiration would thus become a very obvious psychological image. Nor is there any reason to suppose that the old Greeks and Indians were incapable either of such psychological observation or of putting it into the poetical and mystic imagery which was the very body of the ancient Mysteries.

We might indeed go farther and inquire whether there was not some original connection between the hero Bellerophon, slayer of Bellerus, who rides on the divine Horse, and Indra Valahan, the Vedic slayer of Vala, the enemy who keeps for himself the Light. But this would take us beyond the limits of our subject. Nor does this interpretation of the Pegasus legend carry us any farther than to indicate the natural turn of imagination of the Ancients and the way in which they came to figure the stream of inspiration as an actual stream of flowing water. Saraswati means, "she of the stream, the flowing movement", and is therefore a natural name both for a river and for the goddess of inspiration. But by what process of thought or association does the general idea of the river of inspiration come to be associated with a particular earthly stream? And in the Veda it is not a question of one river which by its surroundings, natural and legendary, might seem more fitly associated with the idea of sacred inspiration than any other. For here it is a question not of one, but of seven rivers always associated together in the minds of the Rishis and all of them released together by

the stroke of the God Indra when he smote the Python who coiled across their fountains and sealed up their outflow. It seems impossible to suppose that one river only in all this sevenfold outflowing acquired a psychological significance while the rest were associated only with the annual coming of the rains in the Punjab. The psychological significance of Saraswati carries with it a psychological significance for the whole symbol of the Vedic waters.[2]

Saraswati is not only connected with other rivers but with other goddesses who are plainly psychological symbols and especially with Bharati and Ila. In the later Puranic forms of worship Saraswati is the goddess of speech, of learning and of poetry and Bharati is one of her names, but in the Veda Bharati and Saraswati are different deities. Bharati is also called Mahi, the Large, Great or Vast. The three, Ila, Mahi or Bharati and Saraswati are associated together in a constant formula in those hymns of invocation in which the gods are called by Agni to the Sacrifice.

Iḷā sarasvatī mahī, tisro devīr mayobhuvaḥ;
barhiḥ sīdantvasridhaḥ.

"May Ila, Saraswati and Mahi, three goddesses who give birth to the bliss, take their place on the sacrificial seat, they who stumble not," or "who come not to hurt" or "do no hurt." The epithet means, I think, they in whom there is no false movement with its evil consequences, *duritam*, no stumbling into pitfalls of sin and error. The formula is expanded in Hymn 110 of the tenth Mandala:

Ā no yajñaṁ bhāratī tūyam etu,
iḷā manuṣvad iha cetayantī;
Tisro devīr barhir edaṁ syonaṁ,
sarasvatī svapasaḥ sadantu.

2 The rivers have a symbolic sense in later Indian thought; as for instance Ganges, Yamuna and Saraswati and their confluence are in the Tantric imagery Yogic symbols, and they are used, though in a different way, in Yogic symbolism generally.

"May Bharati come speeding to our sacrifice and Ila hither awakening our consciousness (or, knowledge or perceptions) in human wise, and Saraswati, — three goddesses sit on this blissful seat, doing well the Work."

It is clear and will become yet clearer that these three goddesses have closely connected functions akin to the inspirational power of Saraswati. Saraswati is the Word, the inspiration, as I suggest, that comes from the Ritam, the Truth-consciousness. Bharati and Ila must also be different forms of the same Word or knowledge. In the eighth hymn of Madhuchchhandas we have a Rik in which Bharati is mentioned under the name of Mahi.

Evā hyasya sūnṛtā, virapśī gomatī mahī;
pakvā śākhā na dāśuṣe.

"Thus Mahi for Indra full of the rays, overflowing in her abundance, in her nature a happy truth, becomes as if a ripe branch for the giver of the sacrifice."

The rays in the Veda are the rays of Surya, the Sun. Are we to suppose that the goddess is a deity of the physical Light or are we to translate "go" by cow and suppose that Mahi is full of cows for the sacrificer? The psychological character of Saraswati comes to our rescue against the last absurd supposition, but it negatives equally the naturalistic interpretation. This characterisation of Mahi, Saraswati's companion in the sacrifice, the sister of the goddess of inspiration, entirely identified with her in the later mythology, is one proof among a hundred others that light in the Veda is a symbol of knowledge, of spiritual illumination. Surya is the Lord of the supreme Sight, the vast Light, *bṛhaj jyotiḥ*, or, as it is sometimes called, the true Light, *ṛtaṁ jyotiḥ*. And the connection between the words *ṛtam* and *bṛhat* is constant in the Veda.

It seems to me impossible to see in these expressions anything else than the indication of a state of illumined consciousness the nature of which is that it is wide or large, *bṛhat*, full of the truth of being, *satyam*, and of the truth of knowledge and action, *ṛtam*. The gods have this consciousness. Agni, for instance, is termed *ṛtacit*, he who has the truth-consciousness.

Mahi is full of the rays of this Surya; she carries in her this illumination. Moreover she is *sūnṛtā*, she is the word of a blissful Truth, even as it has been said of Saraswati that she is the impeller of happy truths, *codayitrī sūnṛtānām*. Finally, she is *virapśī*, large or breaking out into abundance, a word which recalls to us that the Truth is also a Largeness, *ṛtaṁ bṛhat*. And in another hymn, (I.22.10), she is described as *varūtrī dhiṣaṇā*, a widely covering or embracing Thought-power. Mahi, then, is the luminous vastness of the Truth, she represents the Largeness, *bṛhat*, of the superconscient in us containing in itself the Truth, *ṛtam*. She is, therefore, for the sacrificer like a branch covered with ripe fruit.

Ila is also the word of the truth; her name has become identical in a later confusion with the idea of speech. As Saraswati is an awakener of the consciousness to right thinkings or right states of mind, *cetantī sumatīnām*, so also Ila comes to the sacrifice awakening the consciousness to knowledge, *cetayantī*. She is full of energy, *suvīrā*, and brings knowledge. She also is connected with Surya, the Sun, as when Agni, the Will is invoked (V.4.4) to labour by the rays of the Sun, Lord of the true Light, being of one mind with Ila, *iḷayā sajoṣā yatamāno raśmibhiḥ sūryasya*. She is the mother of the Rays, the herds of the Sun. Her name means she who seeks and attains and it contains the same association of ideas as the words Ritam and Rishi. Ila may therefore well be the vision of the seer which attains the truth.

As Saraswati represents the truth-audition, *śruti*, which gives the inspired word, so Ila represents *dṛṣṭi*, the truth-vision. If so, since *dṛṣṭi* and *śruti* are the two powers of the Rishi, the Kavi, the Seer of the Truth, we can understand the close connection of Ila and Saraswati. Bharati or Mahi is the largeness of the Truth-consciousness which, dawning on man's limited mind, brings with it the two sister Puissances. We can also understand how these fine and living distinctions came afterwards to be neglected as the Vedic knowledge declined and Bharati, Saraswati, Ila melted into one.

We may note also that these three goddesses are said to

bring to birth for man the Bliss, Mayas. I have already insisted on the constant relation, as conceived by the Vedic seers, between the Truth and the Bliss or Ananda. It is by the dawning of the true or infinite consciousness in man that he arrives out of this evil dream of pain and suffering, this divided creation into the Bliss, the happy state variously described in Veda by the words *bhadram*, *mayas* (love and bliss), *svasti* (the good state of existence, right being) and by others less technically used such as *vāryam*, *rayiḥ*, *rāyaḥ*. For the Vedic Rishi Truth is the passage and the antechamber, the Bliss of the divine existence is the goal, or else Truth is the foundation, Bliss the supreme result.

Such, then, is the character of Saraswati as a psychological principle, her peculiar function and her relation to her most immediate connections among the gods. How far do these shed any light on her relations as the Vedic river to her six sister streams? The number seven plays an exceedingly important part in the Vedic system, as in most very ancient schools of thought. We find it recurring constantly, — the seven delights, *sapta ratnāni*; the seven flames, tongues or rays of Agni, *sapta arciṣaḥ*, *sapta jvālāḥ*; the seven forms of the Thought-principle, *sapta dhītayaḥ*; the seven Rays or Cows, forms of the Cow unslayable, Aditi, mother of the gods, *sapta gāvaḥ*; the seven rivers, the seven mothers or fostering cows, *sapta mātaraḥ*, *sapta dhenavaḥ*, a term applied indifferently to the Rays and to the Rivers. All these sets of seven depend, it seems to me, upon the Vedic classification of the fundamental principles, the tattvas, of existence. The enquiry into the number of these tattvas greatly interested the speculative mind of the ancients and in Indian philosophy we find various answers ranging from the One upward and running into the twenties. In Vedic thought the basis chosen was the number of the psychological principles, because all existence was conceived by the Rishis as a movement of conscious being. However merely curious or barren these speculations and classifications may seem to the modern mind, they were no mere dry metaphysical distinctions, but closely connected with a living psychological practice of which they were to a great extent the thought-basis, and in any case we must understand them clearly

if we wish to form with any accuracy an idea of this ancient and far-off system.

In the Veda, then, we find the number of the principles variously stated. The One was recognised as the basis and continent; in this One there were the two principles divine and human, mortal and immortal. The dual number is also otherwise applied in the two principles, Heaven and Earth, Mind and Body, Soul and Nature, who are regarded as the father and mother of all beings. It is significant, however, that Heaven and Earth, when they symbolise two forms of natural energy, the mental and the physical consciousness, are no longer the father and mother, but the two mothers. The triple principle was doubly recognised, first in the threefold divine principle answering to the later Sachchidananda, the divine existence, consciousness and bliss, and secondly in the threefold mundane principle, Mind, Life, Body, upon which is built the triple world of the Veda and Puranas. But the full number ordinarily recognised is seven. This figure was arrived at by adding the three divine principles to the three mundane and interpolating a seventh or link-principle which is precisely that of the Truth-consciousness, Ritam Brihat, afterwards known as Vijnana or Mahas. The latter term means the Large and is therefore an equivalent of Brihat. There are other classifications of five, eight, nine and ten and even, as it would seem, twelve; but these do not immediately concern us.

All these principles, be it noted, are supposed to be really inseparable and omnipresent and therefore apply themselves to each separate formation of Nature. The seven Thoughts, for instance, are Mind applying itself to each of the seven planes as we would now call them and formulating Matter-mind, if we may so call it, nervous mind, pure mind, truth-mind and so on to the highest summit, *paramā parāvat*. The seven rays or cows are Aditi the infinite Mother, the Cow unslayable, supreme Nature or infinite Consciousness, pristine source of the later idea of Prakriti or Shakti, — the Purusha is in this early pastoral imagery the Bull, Vrishabha, — the Mother of things taking form on the seven planes of her world-action as energy of conscious being. So also, the seven rivers are conscious currents corresponding to

the sevenfold substance of the ocean of being which appears to us formulated in the seven worlds enumerated by the Puranas. It is their full flow in the human consciousness which constitutes the entire activity of the being, his full treasure of substance, his full play of energy. In the Vedic image, his cows drink of the water of the seven rivers.

Should this imagery be admitted, and it is evident that if once such conceptions are supposed to exist, this would be the natural imagery for a people living the life and placed in the surroundings of the ancient Aryans, — quite as natural for them and inevitable as for us the image of the "planes" with which theosophical thought has familiarised us, — the place of Saraswati as one of the seven rivers becomes clear. She is the current which comes from the Truth-principle, from the Ritam or Mahas, and we actually find this principle spoken of in the Veda, — in the closing passage of our third hymn for instance, — as the Great Water, *maho arṇas*, — an expression which gives us at once the origin of the later term, Mahas, — or sometimes *mahān arṇavaḥ*. We see in the third hymn the close connection between Saraswati and this great water. Let us examine a little more closely this connection before we proceed to the consideration of the Vedic cows and their relation to the god Indra and Saraswati's close cousin the goddess Sarama. For it is necessary to define these relations before we can progress with the scrutiny of Madhuchchhandas' other hymns addressed without exception to the great Vedic deity, King of Heaven, who, according to our hypothesis, symbolises the Power of Mind and especially the divine or self-luminous Mind in the human being.

Chapter X

The Image of the Oceans and the Rivers

THE THREE riks of the third hymn of Madhuchchhandas in which Saraswati has been invoked, run as follows, in the Sanskrit: —

Pāvakā naḥ sarasvatī, vājebhir vājinīvatī;
yajñaṁ vaṣṭu dhiyāvasuḥ.
Codayitrī sūnṛtānāṁ, cetantī sumatīnām;
yajñaṁ dadhe sarasvatī.
Maho arṇaḥ sarasvatī, pra cetayati ketunā;
dhiyo viśvā vi rājati.

The sense of the first two verses is clear enough when we know Saraswati to be that power of the Truth which we call inspiration. Inspiration from the Truth purifies by getting rid of all falsehood, for all sin according to the Indian idea is merely falsehood, wrongly inspired emotion, wrongly directed will and action. The central idea of life and ourselves from which we start is a falsehood and all else is falsified by it. Truth comes to us as a light, a voice, compelling a change of thought, imposing a new discernment of ourselves and all around us. Truth of thought creates truth of vision and truth of vision forms in us truth of being, and out of truth of being (*satyam*) flows naturally truth of emotion, will and action. This is indeed the central notion of the Veda.

Saraswati, the inspiration, is full of her luminous plenitudes, rich in substance of thought. She upholds the Sacrifice, the offering of the mortal being's activities to the divine by awakening his consciousness so that it assumes right states of emotion and right movements of thought in accordance with the Truth from which she pours her illuminations and by impelling in it the rise

of those truths which, according to the Vedic Rishis, liberate the life and being from falsehood, weakness and limitation and open to it the doors of the supreme felicity.

By this constant awakening and impulsion, summed up in the word, perception, *ketu*, often called the divine perception, *daivya ketu*, to distinguish it from the false mortal vision of things, — Saraswati brings into active consciousness in the human being the great flood or great movement, the Truth-consciousness itself, and illumines with it all our thoughts. We must remember that this truth-consciousness of the Vedic Rishis is a supra-mental plane, a level of the hill of being (*adreḥ sānu*) which is beyond our ordinary reach and to which we have to climb with difficulty. It is not part of our waking being, it is hidden from us in the sleep of the superconscient. We can then understand what Madhuchchhandas means when he says that Saraswati by the constant action of the inspiration awakens the Truth to consciousness in our thoughts.

But this line may, so far as the mere grammatical form of it goes, be quite otherwise translated; we may take *maho arṇas* in apposition to Saraswati and render the verse "Saraswati, the great river, awakens us to knowledge by the perception and shines in all our thoughts." If we understand by this expression, "the great river", as Sayana seems to understand, the physical river in the Punjab, we get an incoherence of thought and expression which is impossible except in a nightmare or a lunatic asylum. But it is possible to suppose that it means the great flood of inspiration and that there is no reference to the great ocean of the Truth-Consciousness. Elsewhere, however, there is repeated reference to the gods working by the vast power of the great flood (*mahnā mahato arṇavasya*) where there is no reference to Saraswati and it is improbable that she should be meant. It is true that in the Vedic writings Saraswati is spoken of as the secret self of Indra, — an expression, we may observe, that is void of sense if Saraswati is only a northern river and Indra the god of the sky, but has a very profound and striking significance if Indra be the illumined Mind and Saraswati the inspiration that proceeds from the hidden plane of the supra-

mental Truth. But it is impossible to give Saraswati so important a place with regard to the other gods as would be implied by interpreting the phrase *mahnā mahato arṇavasya* in the sense "by the greatness of Saraswati". The gods act, it is continually stated, by the power of the Truth, *ṛtena*, but Saraswati is only one of the deities of the Truth and not even the most important or universal of them. The sense I have given is, therefore, the only rendering consistent with the general thought of the Veda and with the use of the phrase in other passages.

Let us then start from this decisive fact put beyond doubt by this passage — whether we take the great stream to be Saraswati itself or the Truth-ocean — that the Vedic Rishis used the image of water, a river or an ocean, in a figurative sense and as a psychological symbol, and let us see how far it takes us. We notice first that existence itself is constantly spoken of in the Hindu writings, in Veda, Purana and even philosophical reasoning and illustration as an ocean. The Veda speaks of two oceans, the upper and the lower waters. These are the ocean of the subconscient, dark and inexpressive, and the ocean of the superconscient, luminous and eternal expression but beyond the human mind. Vamadeva in the last hymn of the fourth Mandala speaks of these two oceans. He says that a honeyed wave climbs up from the ocean and by means of this mounting wave which is the Soma (*aṁśu*) one attains entirely to immortality; that wave or that Soma is the secret name of the clarity (*ghṛtasya*, the symbol of the clarified butter); it is the tongue of the gods; it is the nodus (*nābhi*) of immortality.

Samudrād ūrmir madhumān udārad,
upāṁśunā sam amṛtatvam ānaṭ;
Ghṛtasya nāma guhyaṁ yad asti,
jihvā devānām amṛtasya nābhiḥ.

I presume there can be no doubt that the sea, the honey, the Soma, the clarified butter are in this passage at least psychological symbols. Certainly, Vamadeva does not mean that a wave or flood of wine came mounting up out of the salt water of the Indian Ocean or of the Bay of Bengal or even from the fresh

water of the river Indus or the Ganges and that this wine is a secret name for clarified butter. What he means to say is clearly that out of the subconscient depths in us arises a honeyed wave of Ananda or pure delight of existence, that it is by this Ananda that we can arrive at immortality; this Ananda is the secret being, the secret reality behind the action of the mind in its shining clarities. Soma, the god of the Ananda, the Vedanta also tells us, is that which has become mind or sensational perception; in other words, all mental sensation carries in it a hidden delight of existence and strives to express that secret of its own being. Therefore Ananda is the tongue of the gods with which they taste the delight of existence; it is the nodus in which all the activities of the immortal state or divine existence are bound together. Vamadeva goes on to say, "Let us give expression to this secret name of the clarity, — that is to say, let us bring out this Soma wine, this hidden delight of existence; let us hold it in this world-sacrifice by our surrenderings or submissions to Agni, the divine Will or Conscious-Power which is the Master of being. He is the four-horned Bull of the worlds and when he listens to the soul-thought of man in its self-expression, he ejects this secret name of delight from its hiding-place."

Vayaṁ nāma pra bravāmā ghṛtasya,
asmin yajñe dhārayāmā namobhiḥ;
Upa brahmā śṛṇavac chasyamānaṁ,
catuḥśṛṅgo avamīd gaura etat.

Let us note, in passing, that since the wine and the clarified butter are symbolic, the sacrifice also must be symbolic. In such hymns as this of Vamadeva's the ritualistic veil so elaborately woven by the Vedic mystics vanishes like a dissolving mist before our eyes and there emerges the Vedantic truth, the secret of the Veda.

Vamadeva leaves us in no doubt as to the nature of the Ocean of which he speaks; for in the fifth verse he openly describes it as the ocean of the heart, *hṛdyāt samudrāt*, out of which rise the waters of the clarity, *ghṛtasya dhārāḥ*; they flow, he says, becoming progressively purified by the mind and the inner heart, *antar hṛdā manasā pūyamānāḥ*. And in the closing

verse he speaks of the whole of existence being triply established, first in the seat of Agni — which we know from other riks to be the Truth-Consciousness, Agni's own home, *svaṁ damam ṛtaṁ bṛhat*, — secondly, in the heart, the sea, which is evidently the same as the heart-ocean, — thirdly, in the life of man.

> *Dhāman te viśvaṁ bhuvanam adhi śritam,*
> *antaḥ samudre hṛdyantar āyuṣi.*

The superconscient, the sea of the subconscient, the life of the living being between the two, — this is the Vedic idea of existence.

The sea of the superconscient is the goal of the rivers of clarity, of the honeyed wave, as the sea of the subconscient in the heart within is their place of rising. This upper sea is spoken of as the Sindhu, a word which may mean either river or ocean; but in this hymn it clearly means ocean. Let us observe the remarkable language in which Vamadeva speaks of these rivers of the clarity. He says first that the gods sought and found the clarity, the *ghṛtam*, triply placed and hidden by the Panis in the cow, *gavi*. It is beyond doubt that *go* is used in the Veda in the double sense of Cow and Light; the Cow is the outer symbol, the inner meaning is the Light. The figure of the cows stolen and hidden by the Panis is constant in the Veda. Here it is evident that as the sea is a psychological symbol — the heart-ocean, *samudre hṛdi*, — and the Soma is a psychological symbol and the clarified butter is a psychological symbol, the cow in which the gods find the clarified butter hidden by the Panis must also symbolise an inner illumination and not physical light. The cow is really Aditi, the infinite consciousness hidden in the subconscient, and the triple *ghṛtam* is the triple clarity of the liberated sensation finding its secret of delight, of the thought-mind attaining to light and intuition and of the truth itself, the ultimate supra-mental vision. This is clear from the second half of the verse in which it is said, "One Indra produced, one Surya, one the gods fashioned by natural development out of Vena"; for Indra is the Master of the thought-mind, Surya of the supra-mental light, Vena is Soma, the master of mental delight of existence, creator of the sense-mind.

We may observe also in passing that the Panis here must perforce be spiritual enemies, powers of darkness, and not Dravidian gods or Dravidian tribes or Dravidian merchants. In the next verse Vamadeva says of the streams of the *ghṛtam* that they move from the heart-ocean shut up in a hundred prisons (pens) by the enemy so that they are not seen. Certainly, this does not mean that rivers of ghee — or of water, either — rising from the heart-ocean or any ocean were caught on their way by the wicked and unconscionable Dravidians and shut up in a hundred pens so that the Aryans or the Aryan gods could not even catch a glimpse of them. We perceive at once that the enemy, Pani, Vritra of the hymns is a purely psychological conception and not an attempt of our forefathers to conceal the facts of early Indian history from their posterity in a cloud of tangled and inextricable myths. The Rishi Vamadeva would have stood aghast at such an unforeseen travesty of his ritual images. We are not even helped if we take *ghṛta* in the sense of water, *hṛdya samudra* in the sense of a delightful lake, and suppose that the Dravidians enclose the water of the rivers with a hundred dams so that the Aryans could not even get a glimpse of them. For even if the rivers of the Punjab all flow out of one heart-pleasing lake, yet their streams of water cannot even so have been triply placed in a cow and the cow hidden in a cave by the cleverest and most inventive Dravidians.

"These move" says Vamadeva "from the heart-ocean; penned by the enemy in a hundred enclosures they cannot be seen; I look towards the streams of the clarity, for in their midst is the Golden Reed. Entirely they stream like flowing rivers becoming purified by the heart within and the mind; these move, waves of the clarity, like animals under the mastery of their driver. As if on a path in front of the Ocean (*sindhu*, the upper ocean) the mighty ones move compact of forceful speed but limited by the vital force (*vāta*, *vāyu*), the streams of clarity; they are like a straining horse which breaks its limits, as it is nourished by the waves." On the very face of it this is the poetry of a mystic concealing his sense from the profane under a veil of images which occasionally he suffers to grow

transparent to the eye that chooses to see. What he means is that the divine knowledge is all the time flowing constantly behind our thoughts, but is kept from us by the internal enemies who limit our material of mind to the sense-action and sense-perception so that though the waves of our being beat on banks that border upon the superconscient, the infinite, they are limited by the nervous action of the sense-mind and cannot reveal their secret. They are like horses controlled and reined in; only when the waves of the light have nourished their strength to the full does the straining steed break these limits and they flow freely towards That from which the Soma-wine is pressed out and the sacrifice is born.

Yatra somaḥ sūyate yatra yajño,
ghṛtasya dhārā abhi tat pavante.

This goal is, again, explained to be that which is all honey, — *ghṛtasya dhārā madhumat pavante*; it is the Ananda, the divine Beatitude. And that this goal is the Sindhu, the superconscient ocean, is made clear in the last rik, where Vamadeva says, "May we taste that honeyed wave of thine" — of Agni, the divine Purusha, the four-horned Bull of the worlds — "which is borne in the force of the Waters where they come together."

Apām anīke samithe ya ābhṛtas,
tam aśyāma madhumantaṁ ta ūrmim.

We find this fundamental idea of the Vedic Rishis brought out in the Hymn of Creation (X.129) where the subconscient is thus described. "Darkness hidden by darkness in the beginning was this all, an ocean without mental consciousness . . . out of it the One was born by the greatness of Its energy. It first moved in it as desire which was the first seed of mind. The Masters of Wisdom found out in the non-existent that which builds up the existent; in the heart they found it by purposeful impulsion and by the thought-mind. Their ray was extended horizontally; there was something above, there was something below." In this passage the same ideas are brought out as in Vamadeva's hymn but without the veil of images. Out of the subconscient ocean

the One arises in the heart first as desire; he moves there in the heart-ocean as an unexpressed desire of the delight of existence and this desire is the first seed of what afterwards appears as the sense-mind. The gods thus find out a means of building up the existent, the conscious being, out of the subconscient darkness; they find it in the heart and bring it out by the growth of thought and purposeful impulsion, *pratīṣyā*, by which is meant mental desire as distinguished from the first vague desire that arises out of the subconscient in the merely vital movements of nature. The conscious existence which they thus create is stretched out as it were horizontally between two other extensions; below is the dark sleep of the subconscient, above is the luminous secrecy of the superconscient. These are the upper and the lower ocean.

This Vedic imagery throws a clear light on the similar symbolic images of the Puranas, especially on the famous symbol of Vishnu sleeping after the pralaya on the folds of the snake Ananta upon the ocean of sweet milk. It may perhaps be objected that the Puranas were written by superstitious Hindu priests or poets who believed that eclipses were caused by a dragon eating the sun and moon and could easily believe that during the periods of non-creation the supreme Deity in a physical body went to sleep on a physical snake upon a material ocean of real milk and that therefore it is a vain ingenuity to seek for a spiritual meaning in these fables. My reply would be that there is in fact no need to seek for such meanings; for these very superstitious poets have put them there plainly on the very surface of the fable for everybody to see who does not choose to be blind. For they have given a name to Vishnu's snake, the name Ananta, and Ananta means the Infinite; therefore they have told us plainly enough that the image is an allegory and that Vishnu, the all-pervading Deity, sleeps in the periods of non-creation on the coils of the Infinite. As for the ocean, the Vedic imagery shows us that it must be the ocean of eternal existence and this ocean of eternal existence is an ocean of absolute sweetness, in other words, of pure Bliss. For the sweet milk (itself a Vedic image) has, evidently, a sense not essentially different from the *madhu*, honey or sweetness, of Vamadeva's hymn.

Thus we find that both Veda and Purana use the same symbolic images; the ocean is for them the image of infinite and eternal existence. We find also that the image of the river or flowing current is used to symbolise a stream of conscious being. We find that Saraswati, one of the seven rivers, is the river of inspiration flowing from the Truth-consciousness. We have the right then to suppose that the other six rivers are also psychological symbols.

But we need not depend entirely on hypothesis and inference, however strong and entirely convincing. As in the hymn of Vamadeva we have seen that the rivers, *ghṛtasya dhārāḥ*, are there not rivers of clarified butter or rivers of physical water, but psychological symbols, so we find in other hymns the same compelling evidence as to the image of the seven rivers. For this purpose I will examine one more hymn, the first Sukta of the third Mandala sung by the Rishi Vishwamitra to the god Agni; for here he speaks of the seven rivers in language as remarkable and unmistakable as the language of Vamadeva about the rivers of clarity. We shall find precisely the same ideas recurring in quite different contexts in the chants of these two sacred singers.

Chapter XI

The Seven Rivers

THE VEDA speaks constantly of the waters or the rivers, especially of the divine waters, *āpo devīḥ* or *āpo divyāḥ*, and occasionally of the waters which carry in them the light of the luminous solar world or the light of the Sun, *svarvatīr apaḥ*. The passage of the waters effected by the Gods or by man with the aid of the Gods is a constant symbol. The three great conquests to which the human being aspires, which the Gods are in constant battle with the Vritras and Panis to give to man are the herds, the waters and the Sun or the solar world, *gā apaḥ svaḥ*. The question is whether these references are to the rains of heaven, the rivers of Northern India possessed or assailed by the Dravidians — the Vritras being sometimes the Dravidians and sometimes their gods, the herds possessed or robbed from the Aryan settlers by the indigenous "robbers" — the Panis who hold or steal the herds being again sometimes the Dravidians and sometimes their gods; or is there a deeper, a spiritual meaning? Is the winning of Swar simply the recovery of the sun from its shadowing by the storm-cloud or its seizure by eclipse or its concealment by the darkness of Night? For here at least there can be no withholding of the sun from the Aryans by human "black-skinned" and "noseless" enemies. Or does the conquest of Swar mean simply the winning of heaven by sacrifice? And in either case what is the sense of this curious collocation of cows, waters and the sun or cows, waters and the sky? Is it not rather a system of symbolic meanings in which the herds, indicated by the word *gāḥ* in the sense both of cows and rays of light, are the illuminations from the higher consciousness which have their origin in the Sun of Light, the Sun of Truth? Is not Swar itself the world or plane of immortality governed by that Light or Truth of the all-illumining Sun called in Veda the vast Truth, *ṛtaṁ bṛhat*, and the true Light? and are not the divine waters, *āpo devīḥ*, *divyāḥ*

or *svarvatīḥ*, the floods of this higher consciousness pouring on the mortal mind from that plane of immortality?

It is, no doubt, easy to point to passages or hymns in which on the surface there seems to be no need of any such interpretation and the *sūkta* can be understood as a prayer or praise for the giving of rain or an account of a battle on the rivers of the Punjab. But the Veda cannot be interpreted by separate passages or hymns. If it is to have any coherent or consistent meaning, we must interpret it as a whole. We may escape our difficulties by assigning to *svar* or *gāḥ* entirely different senses in different passages — just as Sayana sometimes finds in *gāḥ* the sense of cows, sometimes rays and sometimes, with an admirable lightheartedness, compels it to mean waters.[1] But such a system of interpretation is not rational merely because it leads to a "rationalistic" or "common-sense" result. It rather flouts both reason and common sense. We can indeed arrive by it at any result we please, but no reasonable and unbiassed mind can feel convinced that that result was the original sense of the Vedic hymns.

But if we adopt a more consistent method, insuperable difficulties oppose themselves to the purely material sense. We have for instance a hymn (VII.49) of Vasishtha to the divine waters, *āpo devīḥ*, *āpo divyāḥ*, in which the second verse runs, "The divine waters that flow whether in channels dug or self-born, they whose movement is towards the ocean, pure, purifying, — may those waters foster me." Here, it will be said, the sense is quite clear; it is to material waters, earthly rivers, canals, — or, if the word *khanitrimāḥ* means simply "dug", then wells, — that Vasishtha addresses his hymn and *divyāḥ*, divine, is only an ornamental epithet of praise; or even perhaps we may render the verse differently and suppose that three kinds of water are described, — the waters of heaven, that is to say the rain, the water of wells, the water of rivers. But when we study the hymn as a whole this sense can no longer stand. For thus it runs:

[1] So also he interprets the all-important Vedic word *ṛtam* sometimes as sacrifice, sometimes as truth, sometimes as water, and all these different senses in a single hymn of five or six verses!

"May those divine waters foster me, the eldest (or greatest) of the ocean from the midst of the moving flood that go purifying, not settling down, which Indra of the thunderbolt, the Bull, clove out. The divine waters that flow whether in channels dug or self-born, whose movement is towards the Ocean, — may those divine waters foster me. In the midst of whom King Varuna moves looking down on the truth and the falsehood of creatures, they that stream honey and are pure and purifying, — may those divine waters foster me. In whom Varuna the king, in whom Soma, in whom all the Gods have the intoxication of the energy, into whom Agni Vaishwanara has entered, may those divine waters foster me."

It is evident that Vasishtha is speaking here of the same waters, the same streams that Vamadeva hymns, the waters that rise from the ocean and flow into the ocean, the honeyed wave that rises upward from the sea, from the flood that is the heart of things, streams of the clarity, *ghṛtasya dhārāḥ*. They are the floods of the supreme and universal conscious existence in which Varuna moves looking down on the truth and the falsehood of mortals, — a phrase that can apply neither to the descending rains nor to the physical ocean. Varuna in the Veda is not an Indian Neptune, neither is he precisely, as the European scholars at first imagined, the Greek Ouranos, the sky. He is the master of an ethereal wideness, an upper ocean, of the vastness of being, of its purity; in that vastness, it is elsewhere said, he has made paths in the pathless infinite along which Surya, the Sun, the Lord of Truth and the Light can move. Thence he looks down on the mingled truths and falsehoods of the mortal consciousness. And we have farther to note that these divine waters are those which Indra has cloven out and made to flow upon the earth, — a description which throughout the Veda is applied to the seven rivers.

If there were any doubt whether these waters of Vasishtha's prayer are the same as the waters of Vamadeva's great hymn, *madhumān ūrmiḥ*, *ghṛtasya dhārāḥ*, it is entirely removed by another Sukta of the sage Vasishtha, (VII.47). In the forty-ninth hymn he refers briefly to the divine waters as honey-streaming,

madhuścutaḥ and speaks of the Gods enjoying in them the intoxication of the energy, *ūrjaṁ madanti*; from this we can gather that the honey or sweetness is the *madhu*, the Soma, the wine of the Ananda, of which the Gods have the ecstasy. But in the forty-seventh hymn he makes his meaning unmistakably clear.

"O Waters, that supreme wave of yours, the drink of Indra, which the seekers of the Godhead have made for themselves, that pure, inviolate, clarity-streaming, honeyed (*ghṛtapruṣaṁ madhumantam*) wave of you may we today enjoy. O Waters, may the son of the waters (Agni), he of the swift rushings, foster that most honeyed wave of you; that wave of yours in which Indra with the Vasus is intoxicated with ecstasy, may we who seek the Godhead taste today. Strained through the hundred purifiers, ecstatic by their self-nature, they are divine and move to the goal of the movement of the Gods (the supreme ocean); they limit not the workings of Indra: offer to the rivers a food of oblation full of the clarity (*ghṛtavat*). May the rivers which the sun has formed by his rays, from whom Indra clove out a moving wave, establish for us the supreme good. And do ye, O gods, protect us ever by states of felicity."

Here we have Vamadeva's *madhumān ūrmiḥ*, the sweet intoxicating wave, and it is plainly said that this honey, this sweetness is the Soma, the drink of Indra. That is farther made clear by the epithet *śatapavitrāḥ* which can only refer in the Vedic language to the Soma; and let us note that it is an epithet of the rivers themselves and that the honeyed wave is brought flowing from them by Indra, its passage being cloven out on the mountains by the thunderbolt that slew Vritra. Again it is made clear that these waters are the seven rivers released by Indra from the hold of Vritra, the Besieger, the Coverer and sent flowing down upon the earth.

What can these rivers be whose wave is full of Soma wine, full of the *ghṛta*, full of *ūrj*, the energy? What are these waters that flow to the goal of the gods' movement, that establish for man the supreme good? Not the rivers of the Punjab; no wildest assumption of barbarous confusion or insane incoherence in the mentality of the Vedic Rishis can induce us to put such a

construction upon such expressions. Obviously these are the waters of the Truth and the Bliss that flow from the supreme ocean. These rivers flow not upon earth, but in heaven; they are prevented by Vritra the Besieger, the Coverer from flowing down upon the earth-consciousness in which we mortals live till Indra, the god-mind, smites the Coverer with his flashing lightnings and cuts out a passage on the summits of that earth-consciousness down which they can flow. Such is the only rational, coherent and sensible explanation of the thought and language of the Vedic sages. For the rest, Vasishtha makes it clear enough to us; for he says that these are the waters which Surya has formed by his rays and which, unlike earthly movements, do not limit or diminish the workings of Indra, the supreme Mind. They are, in other words, the waters of the Vast Truth, *ṛtaṁ bṛhat* and, as we have always seen that this Truth creates the Bliss, so here we find that these waters of the Truth, *ṛtasya dhārāḥ*, as they are plainly called in other hymns (e.g. V.12.2, "O perceiver of the Truth, perceive the Truth alone, cleave out many streams of the Truth"), establish for men the supreme good and the supreme good[2] is the felicity, the bliss of the divine existence.

Still, neither in these hymns nor in Vamadeva's is there an express mention of the seven rivers. We will turn therefore to the first hymn of Vishwamitra, his hymn to Agni, from its second to its fourteenth verse. The passage is a long one, but it is sufficiently important to cite and translate in full.

2. *Prāñcaṁ yajñaṁ cakṛma vardhatāṁ gīḥ,*
   samidbhir agniṁ namasā duvasyan;
   Divaḥ śaśāsur vidathā kavīnāṁ,
   gṛtsāya cit tavase gātum īṣuḥ.
3. *Mayo dadhe medhiraḥ pūtadakṣo,*
   divaḥ subandhur januṣā pṛthivyāḥ;
   Avindan nu darśatam apsvantar,
   devāso agnim apasi svasṝṇām.

[2] The word indeed is usually understood as "felicity".

4. *Avardhayan subhagaṁ sapta yahvīḥ,*
   śvetaṁ jajñānam aruṣaṁ mahitvā;
   Śiśuṁ na jātam abhyārur aśvā,
   devāso agniṁ janiman vapuṣyan.
5. *Śukrebhir aṅgai raja ātatanvān,*
   kratuṁ punānaḥ kavibhiḥ pavitraiḥ;
   Śocir vasānaḥ pari āyur apāṁ,
   śriyo mimīte bṛhatīr anūnāḥ.
6. *Vavrāja sīm anadatīr adabdhā,*
   divo yahvīr avasānā anagnāḥ;
   Sanā atra yuvatayaḥ sayonīr,
   ekaṁ garbhaṁ dadhire sapta vāṇīḥ.
7. *Stīrṇā asya saṁhato viśvarūpā,*
   ghṛtasya yonau sravathe madhūnām;
   Asthur atra dhenavaḥ pinvamānā,
   mahī dasmasya mātarā samīcī.
8. *Babhrāṇaḥ sūno sahaso vyadyaud,*
   dadhānaḥ śukrā rabhasā vapūṁṣi;
   Ścotanti dhārā madhuno ghṛtasya,
   vṛṣā yatra vāvṛdhe kāvyena.
9. *Pituś cid ūdhar januṣā viveda,*
   vyasya dhārā asṛjad vi dhenāḥ;
   Guhā carantaṁ sakhibhiḥ śivebhir,
   divo yahvībhir na guhā babhūva.
10. *Pituś ca garbhaṁ janituś ca babhre,*
    pūrvīr eko adhayat pīpyānāḥ;
    Vṛṣṇe sapatnī śucaye sabandhū,
    ubhe asmai manuṣye ni pāhi.
11. *Urau mahān anibādhe vavardha,*
    āpo agniṁ yaśasaḥ saṁ hi pūrvīḥ;
    Ṛtasya yonāv aśayad damūnā,
    jāmīnām agnir apasi svasṝṇām.
12. *Akro na babhriḥ samithe mahīnāṁ,*
    didṛkṣeyaḥ sūnave bhā-ṛjīkaḥ;
    Ud usriyā janitā yo jajāna,
    apāṁ garbho nṛtamo yahvo agniḥ.

13. *Apāṁ garbhaṁ darśatam oṣadhīnāṁ,*
vanā jajāna subhagā virūpam;
Devāsaś cin manasā saṁ hi jagmuḥ,
paniṣṭhaṁ jātaṁ tavasaṁ duvasyan.
14. *Bṛhanta id bhānavo bhā-ṛjīkam,*
agniṁ sacanta vidyuto na śukrāḥ;
Guheva vṛddhaṁ sadasi sve antar,
apāra ūrve amṛtaṁ duhānāḥ.

"We have made the sacrifice to ascend towards the supreme, let the Word increase. With kindlings of his fire, with obeisance of submission they set Agni to his workings; they have given expression in the heaven to the knowings of the seers and they desire a passage for him in his strength, in his desire of the word. (2)

"Full of intellect, purified in discernment, the perfect friend (or, perfect builder) from his birth of Heaven and of Earth, he establishes the Bliss; the gods discovered Agni visible in the Waters, in the working of the sisters. (3)

"The seven Mighty Ones increased him who utterly enjoys felicity, white in his birth, ruddy when he has grown. They moved and laboured about him, the Mares around the newborn child; the gods gave body to Agni in his birth. (4)

"With his pure bright limbs he extended and formed the middle world purifying the will-to-action by the help of the pure lords of wisdom; wearing light as a robe about all the life of the Waters he formed in himself glories vast and without any deficiency. (5)

"He moved everywhere about the Mighty Ones of Heaven, and they devoured not, neither were overcome, — they were not clothed, neither were they naked. Here the eternal and ever young goddesses from one womb held the one Child, they the Seven Words. (6)

"Spread out were the masses of him in universal forms in the womb of the clarity, in the flowings of the sweetnesses; here the fostering Rivers stood nourishing themselves; the two Mothers of the accomplishing god became vast and harmonised. (7)

"Borne by them, O child of Force, thou didst blaze out

holding thy bright and rapturous embodiments; out flow the streams of the sweetness, the clarity, where the Bull of the abundance has grown by the Wisdom. (8)

"He discovered at his birth the source of the abundance of the Father and he loosed forth wide His streams and wide His rivers. By his helpful comrades and by the Mighty Ones of Heaven he found Him moving in the secret places of existence, yet himself was not lost in their secrecy. (9)

"He bore the child of the Father and of him that begot him; one, he fed upon his many mothers in their increasing. In this pure Male both these powers in man (Earth and Heaven) have their common lord and lover; do thou guard them both. (10)

"Great in the unobstructed Vast he increased; yea, many Waters victoriously increased Agni. In the source of the Truth he lay down; there he made his home, Agni in the working of the undivided Sisters. (11)

"As the mover in things and as their sustainer he in the meeting of the Great Ones, seeking vision, straight in his lustres for the presser-out of the Soma wine, he who was the father of the Radiances, gave them now their higher birth, — the child of the Waters, the mighty and most strong Agni. (12)

"To the visible Birth of the waters and of the growths of Earth the goddess of Delight now gave birth in many forms, she of the utter felicity. The gods united in him by the mind and they set him to his working who was born full of strength and mighty for the labour. (13)

"Those vast shinings clove to Agni straight in his lustre and were like bright lightnings; from him increasing in the secret places of existence in his own seat within the shoreless Vast they milked out Immortality." (14)

Whatever may be the meaning of this passage, — and it is absolutely clear that it has a mystic significance and is no mere sacrificial hymn of ritualistic barbarians, — the seven rivers, the waters, the seven sisters cannot here be the seven rivers of the Punjab. The waters in which the gods discovered the visible Agni cannot be terrestrial and material streams; this Agni who

increases by knowledge and makes his home and rest in the source of the Truth, of whom Heaven and Earth are the wives and lovers, who is increased by the divine waters in the unobstructed Vast, his own seat, and dwelling in that shoreless infinity yields to the illumined gods the supreme Immortality, cannot be the god of physical Fire. In this passage as in so many others the mystical, the spiritual, the psychological character of the burden of the Veda reveals itself not under the surface, not behind a veil of mere ritualism, but openly, insistently, — in a disguise indeed, but a disguise that is transparent, so that the secret truth of the Veda appears here, like the rivers of Vishwamitra's hymn, "neither veiled nor naked".

We see that these Waters are the same as those of Vamadeva's hymn, of Vasishtha's, closely connected with the clarity and the honey, — *ghṛtasya yonau sravathe madhūnām*, *ścotanti dhārā madhuno ghṛtasya*; they lead to the Truth, they are themselves the source of the Truth, they flow in the unobstructed and shoreless Vast as well as here upon the earth. They are figured as fostering cows (*dhenavaḥ*), mares (*aśvāḥ*), they are called *sapta vāṇīḥ*, the seven Words of the creative goddess Vak, — Speech, the expressive power of Aditi, of the supreme Prakriti who is spoken of as the Cow just as the Deva or Purusha is described in the Veda as Vrishabha or Vrishan, the Bull. They are therefore the seven strands of all being, the seven streams or currents or forms of movement of the one conscious existence.

We shall find that in the light of the ideas which we have discovered from the very opening of the Veda in Madhuchchhandas' hymns and in the light of the symbolic interpretations which are now becoming clear to us, this passage apparently so figured, mysterious, enigmatical becomes perfectly straightforward and coherent, as indeed do all the passages of the Veda which seem now almost unintelligible when once their right clue is found. We have only to fix the psychological function of Agni, the priest, the fighter, the worker, the truth-finder, the winner of beatitude for man; and that has already been fixed for us in the first hymn of the Rig Veda by Madhuchchhandas' description of him, — "the Will in works of the Seer true and most rich in

varied inspiration." Agni is the Deva, the All-Seer, manifested as conscious-force or, as it would be called in modern language, Divine or Cosmic Will, first hidden and building up the eternal worlds, then manifest, "born", building up in man the Truth and the Immortality.

Gods and men, says Vishwamitra in effect, kindle this divine force by lighting the fires of the inner sacrifice; they enable it to work by their adoration and submission to it; they express in heaven, that is to say, in the pure mentality which is symbolised by Dyaus, the knowings of the Seers, in other words the illuminations of the Truth-consciousness which exceeds Mind; and they do this in order to make a passage for this divine force which in its strength seeking always to find the word of right self-expression aspires beyond mind. This divine will carrying in all its workings the secret of the divine knowledge, *kavikratuḥ*, befriends or builds up the mental and physical consciousness in man, *divaḥ pṛthivyāḥ*, perfects the intellect, purifies the discernment so that they grow to be capable of the "knowings of the seers" and by the superconscient Truth thus made conscient in us establishes firmly the Beatitude (vs. 2-3).

The rest of the passage describes the ascent of this divine conscious-force, Agni, this Immortal in mortals who in the sacrifice takes the place of the ordinary will and knowledge of man, from the mortal and physical consciousness to the immortality of the Truth and the Beatitude. The Vedic Rishis speak of five births for man, five worlds of creatures where works are done, *pañca janāḥ*, *pañca kṛṣṭīḥ* or *kṣitīḥ*. Dyaus and Prithivi represent the pure mental and the physical consciousness; between them is the Antariksha, the intermediate or connecting level of the vital or nervous consciousness. Dyaus and Prithivi are Rodasi, our two firmaments; but these have to be overpassed, for then we find admission to another heaven than that of the pure mind — to the wide, the Vast which is the basis, the foundation (*budhna*) of the infinite consciousness, Aditi. This Vast is the Truth which supports the supreme triple world, those highest steps or seats (*padāni*, *sadāṁsi*) of Agni, of Vishnu, those supreme Names of the Mother, the cow, Aditi. The Vast or Truth is declared to be

the own or proper seat or home of Agni, *svaṁ damam*, *svaṁ sadaḥ*. Agni is described in this hymn ascending from earth to his own seat.

This divine Power is found by the gods visible in the Waters, in the working of the Sisters. These are the sevenfold waters of the Truth, the divine waters brought down from the heights of our being by Indra. First it is secret in the earth's growths, *oṣadhīḥ*, the things that hold her heats, and has to be brought out by a sort of force, by a pressure of the two *araṇis*, earth and heaven. Therefore it is called the child of the earth's growths and the child of the earth and heaven; this immortal Force is produced by man with pain and difficulty from the workings of the pure mind upon the physical being. But in the divine waters Agni is found visible and easily born in all his strength and in all his knowledge and in all his enjoyment, entirely white and pure, growing ruddy with his action as he increases (v. 3). From his very birth the Gods give him force and splendour and body; the seven mighty Rivers increase him in his joy; they move about this great newborn child and labour over him as the Mares, *aśvāḥ* (v. 4).

The rivers, usually named *dhenavaḥ*, fostering cows, are here described as *aśvāḥ*, Mares, because while the Cow is the symbol of consciousness in the form of knowledge, the Horse is the symbol of consciousness in the form of force. Ashwa, the Horse, is the dynamic force of Life, and the rivers labouring over Agni on the earth become the waters of Life, of the vital dynamis or kinesis, the Prana, which moves and acts and desires and enjoys. Agni himself begins as material heat and power, manifests secondarily as the Horse and then only becomes the heavenly fire. His first work is to give as the child of the Waters its full form and extension and purity to the middle world, the vital or dynamic plane, *raja ātatanvān*. He purifies the nervous life in man pervading it with his own pure bright limbs, lifting upward its impulsions and desires, its purified will in works (*kratum*) by the pure powers of the super-conscient Truth and Wisdom, *kavibhiḥ pavitraiḥ*. So he wears his vast glories, no longer the broken and limited activity

of desires and instincts, all about the life of the Waters (vs. 4-5).

The sevenfold waters thus rise upward and become the pure mental activity, the Mighty Ones of Heaven. They there reveal themselves as the first eternal ever-young energies, separate streams but of one origin — for they have all flowed from the one womb of the super-conscient Truth — the seven Words or fundamental creative expressions of the divine Mind, *sapta vāṇīḥ*. This life of the pure mind is not like that of the nervous life which devours its objects in order to sustain its mortal existence; its waters devour not but they do not fail; they are the eternal truth robed in a transparent veil of mental forms; therefore, it is said, they are neither clothed nor naked (v. 6).

But this is not the last stage. The Force rises into the womb or birthplace of this mental clarity (*ghṛtasya*) where the waters flow as streams of the divine sweetness (*sravathe madhūnām*); there the forms it assumes are universal forms, masses of the vast and infinite consciousness. As a result, the fostering rivers in the lower world are nourished by this descending higher sweetness and the mental and physical consciousness, the two first mothers of the all-effecting Will, become in their entire largeness perfectly equal and harmonised by this light of the Truth, through this nourishing by the infinite Bliss. They bear the full force of Agni, the blaze of his lightnings, the glory and rapture of his universal forms. For where the Lord, the Male, the Bull of the abundance is increased by the wisdom of the super-conscient Truth, there always flow the streams of the clarity and the streams of the bliss (vs. 7-8).

The Father of all things is the Lord and Male; he is hidden in the secret source of things, in the super-conscient; Agni, with his companion gods and with the sevenfold Waters, enters into the super-conscient without therefore disappearing from our conscient existence, finds the source of the honeyed plenty of the Father of things and pours them out on our life. He bears and himself becomes the Son, the pure Kumara, the pure Male, the One, the soul in man revealed in its universality; the mental and physical consciousness in the human being accept him as their

lord and lover; but, though one, he still enjoys the manifold movement of the rivers, the multiple cosmic energies (vs. 9-10).

Then we are told expressly that this infinite into which he has entered and in which he grows, in which the many Waters victoriously reaching their goal (*yaśasaḥ*) increase him, is the unobstructed vast where the Truth is born, the shoreless infinite, his own natural seat in which he now takes up his home. There the seven rivers, the sisters, work no longer separated though of one origin as on the earth and in the mortal life, but rather as indivisible companions (*jāmīnām apasi svasṝṇām*). In that entire meeting of these great ones Agni moves in all things and upbears all things; the rays of his vision are perfectly straight, no longer affected by the lower crookedness; he from whom the radiances of knowledge, the brilliant herds, were born, now gives them this high and supreme birth; he turns them into the divine knowledge, the immortal consciousness (vs. 11-12).

This also is his own new and last birth. He who was born as the Son of Force from the growths of earth, he who was born as the child of the Waters, is now born in many forms to the goddess of bliss, she who has the entire felicity, that is to say to the divine conscious beatitude, in the shoreless infinite. The gods or divine powers in man using the mind as an instrument reach him there, unite around him, set him to the great work of the world in this new, mighty and effective birth. They, the outshinings of that vast consciousness, cleave to this divine Force as its bright lightnings and from him in the super-conscient, the shoreless vast, his own home, they draw for man the Immortality.

Such then, profound, coherent, luminous behind the veil of figures is the sense of the Vedic symbol of the seven rivers, of the Waters, of the five worlds, of the birth and ascent of Agni which is also the upward journey of man and the Gods whose image man forms in himself from level to level of the great hill of being (*sānoḥ sānum*). Once we apply it and seize the true sense of the symbol of the Cow and the symbol of the Soma with a just conception of the psychological functions of the Gods, all the apparent incoherences and obscurities and far-fetched chaotic confusion of these ancient hymns disappears in a

moment. Simply, easily, without straining there disengages itself the profound and luminous doctrine of the ancient Mystics, the secret of the Veda.

Chapter XII

The Herds of the Dawn

THE SEVEN Rivers of the Veda, the Waters, *āpaḥ*, are usually designated in the figured Vedic language as the seven Mothers or the seven fostering Cows, *sapta dhenavaḥ*. The word *āpaḥ* itself has, covertly, a double significance; for the root *ap* meant originally not only to move from which in all probability is derived the sense of waters, but to be or bring into being, as in *apatya*, a child, and the Southern Indian *appā*, father. The seven Waters are the waters of being; they are the Mothers from whom all forms of existence are born. But we meet also another expression, *sapta gāvaḥ*, the seven Cows or the seven Lights, and the epithet *saptagu*, that which has seven rays. *Gu* (*gavaḥ*) and *go* (*gāvaḥ*) bear throughout the Vedic hymns this double sense of cows and radiances. In the ancient Indian system of thought being and consciousness were aspects of each other, and Aditi, infinite existence from whom the gods are born, described as the Mother with her seven names and seven seats (*dhāmāni*), is also conceived as the infinite consciousness, the Cow, the primal Light manifest in seven Radiances, *sapta gāvaḥ*. The sevenfold principle of existence is therefore imaged from the one point of view in the figure of the Rivers that arise from the ocean, *sapta dhenavaḥ*, from the other in the figure of the Rays of the all-creating Father, Surya Savitri, *sapta gāvaḥ*.

The image of the Cow is the most important of all the Vedic symbols. For the ritualist the word *go* means simply a physical cow and nothing else, just as its companion word, *aśva*, means simply a physical horse and has no other sense, or as *ghṛta* means only water or clarified butter, *vīra* only a son or a retainer or servant. When the Rishi prays to the Dawn, *gomad vīravad dhehi ratnam uṣo aśvāvat*, the ritualistic commentator sees in the invocation only an entreaty for "pleasant wealth to which are attached cows, men (or sons) and horses". If on the other

hand these words are symbolic, the sense will run, "Confirm in us a state of bliss full of light, of conquering energy and of force of vitality." It is therefore necessary to decide once for all the significance of the word *go* in the Vedic hymns. If it proves to be symbolic, then these other words, — *aśva*, horse, *vīra*, man or hero, *apatya* or *prajā*, offspring, *hiraṇya*, gold, *vāja*, plenty (food, according to Sayana), — by which it is continually accompanied, must perforce assume also a symbolic and a kindred significance.

The image of the Cow is constantly associated in Veda with the Dawn and the Sun; it also recurs in the legend of the recovery of the lost cows from the cave of the Panis by Indra and Brihaspati with the aid of the hound Sarama and the Angiras Rishis. The conception of the Dawn and the legend of the Angirases are at the very heart of the Vedic cult and may almost be considered as the key to the secret of the significance of Veda. It is therefore these two that we must examine in order to find firm ground for our inquiry.

Now even the most superficial examination of the Vedic hymns to the Dawn makes it perfectly clear that the cows of the Dawn, the cows of the Sun are a symbol for Light and cannot be anything else. Sayana himself is obliged in these hymns to interpret the word sometimes as cows, sometimes as rays, — careless as usual of consistency; sometimes he will even tell us that *go* like *ṛtam*, the word for truth, means water. As a matter of fact it is evident that we are meant to take the word in a double sense, "light" as the true significance, "cow" as the concrete image and verbal figure.

The sense of "rays" is quite indisputable in such passages as the third verse of Madhuchchhandas' hymn to Indra, I.7, "Indra for far vision made the Sun to ascend in heaven: he sped him all over the hill by his rays," *vi gobhir adrim airayat*.[1] But at the same time, the rays of Surya are the herds of the Sun, the kine

[1] We may also translate "He sent abroad the thunderbolt with its lights"; but this does not make as good and coherent a sense; even if we take it, *gobhir* must mean "radiances" not "cows".

of Helios slain by the companions of Odysseus in the Odyssey, stolen by Hermes from his brother Apollo in the Homeric hymn to Hermes. They are the cows concealed by the enemy Vala, by the Panis; when Madhuchchhandas says to Indra, "Thou didst uncover the hole of Vala of the Cows", he means that Vala is the concealer, the withholder of the Light and it is the concealed Light that Indra restores to the sacrificer. The recovery of the lost or stolen cows is constantly spoken of in the Vedic hymns and its sense will be clear enough when we come to examine the legend of the Panis and of the Angirases.

Once this sense is established, the material explanation of the Vedic prayer for "cows" is at once shaken; for if the lost cows for whose restoration the Rishis invoke Indra, are not physical herds stolen by the Dravidians but the shining herds of the Sun, of the Light, then we are justified in considering whether the same figure does not apply when there is the simple prayer for "cows" without any reference to any hostile interception. For instance in I.4.2 it is said of Indra, the maker of perfect forms who is as a good milker in the milking of the cows, that his ecstasy of the Soma-Wine is verily "cow-giving", *godā id revato madaḥ*. It is the height of absurdity and irrationality to understand by this phrase that Indra is a very wealthy god and, when he gets drunk, exceedingly liberal in the matter of cow-giving. It is obvious that as the cow-milking in the first verse is a figure, so the cow-giving in the second verse is a figure. And if we know from other passages of the Veda that the Cow is the symbol of Light, we must understand here also that Indra, when full of the Soma-ecstasy, is sure to give us the Light.

In the hymns to the Dawn the symbolic sense of the cows of light is equally clear. Dawn is described always as *gomatī*, which must mean, obviously, luminous or radiant; for it would be nonsense to use "cowful" in a literal sense as the fixed epithet of the Dawn. But the image of the cows is there in the epithet; for Usha is not only *gomatī*, she is *gomatī aśvāvatī*; she has always with her her cows and her horses. She creates light for all the world and opens out the darkness as the pen of the Cow, where we have without any possibility of mistake the cow as the

symbol of light, (I.92.4). We may note also that in this hymn I.92, the Ashwins are asked to drive downward their chariot on a path that is radiant and golden, *gomad hiraṇyavad*. Moreover Dawn is said to be drawn in her chariot sometimes by ruddy cows, sometimes by ruddy horses. "She yokes her host of the ruddy cows"; *yuṅkte gavām aruṇānām anīkam* (I.124.11), — where the second meaning "her host of the ruddy rays" stands clear behind the concrete image. She is described as the mother of the cows or radiances; *gavāṁ janitrī akṛta pra ketum* (I.124.5), "the Mother of the cows (radiances) has created vision", and it is said elsewhere of her action, "vision" or "perception has dawned now where nought was"; and again it is clear that the cows are the shining herds of the Light. She is also praised as "the leader of the shining herds", *netrī gavām*, VII.76.6; and there is an illuminating verse in which the two ideas are combined, "the Mother of the Herds, the guide of the days", *gavāṁ mātā netrī ahnām* (VII.77.2). Finally, as if to remove the veil of the image entirely, the Veda itself tells us that the herds are a figure for the rays of the Light, "her happy rays come into sight like cows released into movement" — *prati bhadrā adṛkṣata gavāṁ sargā na raśmayaḥ* (IV.52.5). And we have the still more conclusive verse, VII.79.2, "Thy cows (rays) remove the darkness and extend the Light"; *saṁ te gāvas tama ā vartayanti, jyotir yacchanti.*[2]

But Dawn is not only drawn by these shining herds; she brings them as a gift to the sacrificer; she is, like Indra in his Soma-ecstasy, a giver of the Light. In a hymn of Vasishtha (VII.75) she is described as sharing in the action of the gods by which the strong places where the herds are concealed are broken open and they are given to men; "True with the gods who are true, great with the gods who are great, she breaks open the strong places and gives of the shining herds; the cows low towards the dawn," — *rujad dṛḍhāni dadad usriyāṇāṁ, prati*

[2] It cannot of course be disputed that *go* means light in the Veda e.g. when it is said that Vritra is slain *gavā*, by light, there is no question of the cow; the question is of the use of the double sense and of the cow as a symbol.

gāva uṣasaṁ vāvaśanta. And in the very next verse she is asked to confirm or establish for the sacrificers *gomad ratnam aśvāvat purubhojaḥ*, a state of bliss full of the light (cows), of the horses (vital force) and of many enjoyments. The herds which Usha gives are therefore the shining troops of the Light recovered by the gods and the Angiras Rishis from the strong places of Vala and the Panis and the wealth of cows (and horses) for which the Rishis constantly pray can be no other than a wealth of this same Light; for it is impossible to suppose that the cows which Usha is said to give in the seventh verse of the hymn are different from the cows which are prayed for in the eighth, — that the word in the former verse means light and in the next physical cows and that the Rishi has forgotten the image he was using the very moment it has fallen from his tongue.

Sometimes the prayer is not for luminous delight or luminous plenitude, but for a luminous impulsion or force; "Bring to us, O daughter of Heaven, luminous impulsions along with the rays of the Sun," *gomatīr iṣa ā vahā duhitar divaḥ, sākaṁ sūryasya raśmibhiḥ*, V.79.8. Sayana explains that this means "shining foods", but it is obviously nonsense to talk of radiant foods being brought by Dawn with the rays of the Sun. If *iṣ* means food, then we have to understand by the phrase "food of cow's flesh", but, although the eating of cow's flesh was not forbidden in the early times, as is apparent from the Brahmanas, still that this sense which Sayana avoids as shocking to the later Hindu sentiment, is not intended — it would be quite as absurd as the other, — is proved by another verse of the Rig Veda in which the Ashwins are invoked to give the luminous impulsion that carries us through to the other side of the darkness, *yā naḥ pīparad aśvinā jyotiṣmatī tamas tiraḥ, tām asme rāsāthām iṣam* (I.46.6).

We can perceive from these typical examples how pervading is this image of the Cow of Light and how inevitably it points to a psychological sense for the Veda. A doubt, however, intervenes. Why should we not, even accepting this inevitable conclusion that the cow is an image for Light, understand it to mean simply the light of day as the language of the Veda seems to intend?

Why suppose a symbol where there is only an image? Why invite the difficulty of a double figure in which "cow" means light of dawn and light of dawn is the symbol of an inner illumination? Why not take it that the Rishis were praying not for spiritual illumination, but for daylight?

The objections are manifold and some of them overwhelming. If we assume that the Vedic hymns were composed in India and the dawn is the Indian dawn and the night the brief Indian night of ten or twelve hours, we have to start with the concession that the Vedic Rishis were savages overpowered by a terror of the darkness which they peopled with goblins, ignorant of the natural law of the succession of night and day — which is yet beautifully hymned in many of the Suktas, — and believed that it was only by their prayers and sacrifices that the Sun rose in the heavens and the Dawn emerged from the embrace of her sister Night. Yet they speak of the undeviating rule of the action of the Gods, and of Dawn following always the path of the eternal Law or Truth! We have to suppose that when the Rishi gives vent to the joyous cry "We have crossed over to the other shore of this darkness!", it was only the normal awakening to the daily sunrise that he thus eagerly hymned. We have to suppose that the Vedic peoples sat down to the sacrifice at dawn and prayed for the light when it had already come. And if we accept all these improbabilities, we are met by the clear statement that it was only after they had sat for nine or for ten months that the lost light and the lost sun were recovered by the Angiras Rishis. And what are we to make of the constant assertion of the discovery of the Light by the Fathers; — "Our fathers found out the hidden light, by the truth in their thoughts they brought to birth the Dawn," *gūḍhaṁ jyotiḥ pitaro anvavindan, satyamantrā ajanayan uṣāsam* (VII.76.4). If we found such a verse in any collection of poems in any literature, we would at once give it a psychological or a spiritual sense; there is no just reason for a different treatment of the Veda.

If, however, we are to give a naturalistic explanation and no other to the Vedic hymns, it is quite clear that the Vedic Dawn and Night cannot be the Night and Dawn of India; it

is only in the Arctic regions that the attitude of the Rishis towards these natural circumstances and the statements about the Angirases become at all intelligible. But though it is extremely probable that the memories of the Arctic home enter into the external sense of the Veda, the Arctic theory does not exclude an inner sense behind the ancient images drawn from Nature nor does it dispense with the necessity for a more coherent and straightforward explanation of the hymns to the Dawn.

We have, for instance, the hymn of Praskanwa Kanwa to the Ashwins (I.46) in which there is the reference to the luminous impulsion that carries us through to the other shore of the darkness. This hymn is intimately connected with the Vedic idea of the Dawn and the Night. It contains references to many of the fixed Vedic images, to the path of the Truth, the crossing of the rivers, the rising of the Sun, the connection between the Dawn and the Ashwins, the mystic effect and oceanic essence of the Soma Wine.

"Lo, the Dawn than which there is none higher, opens out full of delight in the Heavens; O Ashwins, the Vast of you I affirm, ye of whom the Ocean is the mother, accomplishers of the work who pass beyond through the mind to the felicities and, divine, find that substance by the thought. . . . O Lords of the Voyage, who mentalise the word, this is the dissolver of your thinkings, — drink ye of the Soma violently; give to us that impulsion, O Ashwins which, luminous, carries us through beyond the darkness. Travel for us in your ship to reach the other shore beyond the thoughts of the mind. Yoke, O Ashwins, your car, — your car that becomes the vast oared ship in Heaven, in the crossing of its rivers. By the thought the powers of Delight have been yoked. The Soma-powers of delight in heaven are that substance in the place of the Waters. But where shall you cast aside the veil you have made to conceal you? Nay, Light has been born for the joy of the Soma; — the Sun that was dark has shot out its tongue towards the Gold. The path of the Truth has come into being by which we shall travel to that other shore; seen is all the wide way through Heaven. The seeker grows in his being towards increasing manifestation after manifestation

of the Ashwins when they find satisfaction in the ecstasy of the Soma. Do ye, dwelling (or, shining) in the all-luminous Sun, by the drinking of the Soma, by the Word come as creators of the bliss into our humanity. Dawn comes to us according to your glory when you pervade all our worlds and you win the Truths out of the Nights. Both together drink, O Ashwins, both together extend to us the peace by expandings whose wholeness remains untorn."

This is the straightforward and natural sense of the hymn and its intention is not difficult to follow if we remember the main ideas and images of the Vedic doctrine. The Night is clearly the image of an inner darkness; by the coming of the Dawn the Truths are won out of the Nights. This is the rising of the Sun which was lost in the obscurity — the familiar figure of the lost sun recovered by the Gods and the Angiras Rishis — the sun of Truth, and it now shoots out its tongue of fire towards the golden Light: — for *hiraṇya*, gold is the concrete symbol of the higher light, the gold of the Truth, and it is this treasure not golden coin for which the Vedic Rishis pray to the Gods. This great change from the inner obscuration to the illumination is effected by the Ashwins, lords of the joyous upward action of the mind and the vital powers, through the immortal wine of the Ananda poured into mind and body and there drunk by them. They mentalise the expressive Word, they lead us into the heaven of pure mind beyond this darkness and there by the Thought they set the powers of the Delight to work. But even over the heavenly waters they cross, for the power of the Soma helps them to dissolve all mental constructions, and they cast aside even this veil; they go beyond Mind and the last attaining is described as the crossing of the rivers, the passage through the heaven of the pure mind, the journey by the path of the Truth to the other side. Not till we reach the highest supreme, *paramā parāvat*, do we rest at last from the great human journey.

We shall see that not only in this hymn, but everywhere Dawn comes as a bringer of the Truth, is herself the outshining of the Truth. She is the divine Dawn and the physical dawning is only her shadow and symbol in the material universe.

Chapter XIII

Dawn and the Truth

USHA IS described repeatedly as the Mother of the Cows. If then the cow is a Vedic symbol for the physical light or for spiritual illumination the phrase must either bear this sense that she is the mother or source of the physical rays of the daylight or else that she creates the radiances of the supreme Day, the splendour and clarity of the inner illumination. But we see in the Veda that Aditi, the Mother of the Gods, is described both as the Cow and as the general Mother; she is the Supreme Light and all radiances proceed from her. Psychologically, Aditi is the supreme or infinite Consciousness, mother of the gods, in opposition to Danu or Diti,[1] the divided consciousness, mother of Vritra and the other Danavas — enemies of the gods and of man in his progress. In a more general aspect she is the source of all the cosmic forms of consciousness from the physical upwards; the seven cows, *sapta gāvaḥ*, are her forms and there are, we are told, seven names and seven seats of the Mother. Usha as the mother of the cows can only be a form or power of this supreme Light, of this supreme Consciousness, of Aditi. And in fact, we do find her so described in I.113.19, *mātā devānām aditer anīkam*, "Mother of the gods, form (or, power) of Aditi."

But the illumining dawn of the higher or undivided Consciousness is always the dawn of the Truth; if Usha is that illumining dawn, then we are bound to find her advent frequently associated in the verses of the Rig Veda with the idea of the Truth, the Ritam. And such association we do repeatedly find. For, first of all, Usha is described as "following effectively the path of the Truth," *ṛtasya panthām anveti sādhu*. Here neither the ritualistic nor the naturalistic sense suggested for *ṛtam* can at

[1] Not that the word Aditi is etymologically the privative of Diti; the two words derive from entirely different roots, *ad* and *di*.

all apply; there would be no meaning in a constant affirmation that Dawn follows the path of the sacrifice or follows the path of the water. We can only escape from the obvious significance if we choose to understand by *panthā ṛtasya* the path, not of the Truth, but of the Sun. But the Veda describes rather the Sun as following the path of Usha and this would be the natural image suggested to an observer of the physical Dawn. Moreover, even if the phrase did not clearly in other passages mean the path of the Truth, the psychological significance would still intervene; for the sense would then be that the dawn of illumination follows the path of the True or the Lord of the Truth, Surya Savitri.

We have precisely the same idea repeated but with still clearer and fuller psychological indications in I.124.3; *ṛtasya panthām anveti sādhu, prajānatīva na diśo mināti*: "She moves according to the path of the Truth and, as one that knows, she limits not the regions." *Disaḥ*, we may note, has a double sense; but it is not necessary to insist upon it here. Dawn adheres to the path of the Truth and because she has this knowledge or perception she does not limit the infinity, the *bṛhat*, of which she is the illumination. That this is the true sense of the verse is proved beyond dispute, expressly, unmistakably, by a Rik of the fifth Mandala (V.80.1) which describes Usha *dyutad-yāmānaṁ bṛhatīm ṛtena ṛtāvarīṁ svar āvahantīm*, "of a luminous movement, vast with the Truth, supreme in (or possessed of) the Truth, bringing with her Swar." We have the idea of the Vast, the idea of the Truth, the idea of the solar light of the world of Swar; and certainly all these notions are thus intimately and insistently associated with no mere physical Dawn! We may compare VII.75.1, *vyuṣā āvo divijā ṛtena, āviṣkṛṇvānā mahimānam āgāt*; "Dawn born in heaven opens out things by the Truth, she comes manifesting the greatness." Again we have Dawn revealing all things by the power of the Truth and the result described as the manifestation of a certain Vastness.

Finally we have the same idea described, but with the use of another word for Truth, *satyā* which does not, like *ṛtam*, lend itself to any ambiguity, *satyā satyebhir mahatī mahadbhir*

devī devebhir (VII.75.7), "Dawn true in her being with the gods who are true, vast with the Gods who are vast." This "truth" of the Dawn is much insisted upon by Vamadeva in one of his hymns, IV.51; for there not only does he speak of the Dawns "encompassing the worlds immediately with horses yoked by the Truth," *ṛtayugbhir aśvaiḥ* (cf. VI.65.2) but he speaks of them as *bhadrā ṛtajātasatyāḥ*, "happy, and true because born from the Truth"; and in another verse he describes them as "the goddesses who awake from the seat of the Truth."

This close connection of *bhadrā* and *ṛta* reminds us of the same connection of ideas in Madhuchchhandas' Hymn to Agni. In our psychological interpretation of the Veda we are met at every turn by the ancient conception of the Truth as the path to the Bliss. Usha, the dawn of the illumination of the Truth, must necessarily bring also the joy and the beatitude. This idea of the Dawn as the bringer of delight we find constantly in the Veda and Vasishtha gives a very positive expression to it in VII.81.3, *yā vahasi puru spārhaṁ ratnaṁ na dāśuṣe mayaḥ*, "thou who bearest to the giver the beatitude as a manifold and desirable ecstasy."

A common Vedic word is the word *sūnṛtā* which Sayana interprets as "pleasant and true speech"; but it seems to have often the more general sense of "happy truths". Dawn is sometimes described as *ṛtāvarī*, full of the Truth, sometimes as *sūnṛtāvarī*. She comes uttering her true and happy words, *sūnṛtā īrayantī*. As she has been described as the leader of the radiant herds and the leader of the days, so she is described as the luminous leader of happy truths, *bhāsvatī netrī sūnṛtānām* (I.92.7). And this close connection in the mind of the Vedic Rishis between the idea of light, of the rays or cows, and the idea of the truth is even more unmistakable in another Rik, I.92.14, *gomati aśvāvati vibhāvari . . . sūnṛtāvati*, "Dawn with thy shining herds, with thy steeds, widely luminous, full of happy truths." A similar but yet more open phrase in I.48.2 points the significance of this collocation of epithets, *aśvāvatīr gomatīr viśvasuvidaḥ*, "Dawns with their swiftnesses (horses), their radiances (herds), rightly knowing all things."

These are by no means all the indications of the psychological character of the Vedic Dawn that we find in the Rig Veda. Dawn is constantly represented as awakening to vision, perception, right movement. "The goddess," says Gotama Rahugana, "fronts and looks upon all the worlds, the eye of vision shines with an utter wideness; awakening all life for movement she discovers speech for all that thinks," *viśvasya vācam avidan manāyoḥ* (I.92.9). We have here a Dawn that releases life and mind into their fullest wideness and we ignore the whole force of the words and phrases chosen by the Rishi if we limit the suggestion to a mere picture of the reawakening of earthly life in the physical dawning. And even if here the word used for the vision brought by the Dawn, *cakṣuḥ*, is capable of indicating only physical sight, yet in other passages it is *ketuḥ* which means perception, a perceptive vision in the mental consciousness, a faculty of knowledge. Usha is *pracetāḥ*, she who has this perceptive knowledge. Mother of the radiances, she has created this perceptive vision of the mind; *gavāṁ janitrī akṛta pra ketum* (I.124.5). She is herself that vision, — "Now perceptive vision has broken out into its wide dawn where nought was before," *vi nūnam ucchād asati pra ketuḥ* (I.124.11). She is by her perceptive power possessed of the happy truths, *cikitvit-sūnṛtāvarī* (IV.52.4).

This perception, this vision is, we are told, that of the Immortality, *amṛtasya ketuḥ* (III.61.3); it is the light, in other words, of the Truth and the Bliss which constitute the higher or immortal consciousness. Night in the Veda is the symbol of our obscure consciousness full of ignorance in knowledge and of stumblings in will and act, therefore of all evil, sin and suffering; light is the coming of the illuminated higher consciousness which leads to truth and happiness. We find constantly the opposition of the two words *duritam* and *suvitam*. *Duritam* means literally stumbling or wrong going, figuratively all that is wrong and evil, all sin, error, calamity; *suvitam* means literally right or good going and expresses all that is good and happy, it means especially the felicity that comes by following the right path. Thus Vasishtha says of the goddess (VII.78.2), "Dawn

comes divine repelling by the Light all darknesses and evils," *viśvā tamāṁsi duritā*; and in a number of verses the goddess is described as awakening, impelling or leading men to right going, to the happiness, *suvitāya*.

Therefore she is the leader not only of happy truths, but of our spiritual wealth and joy, bringer of the felicity which is reached by man or brought to him by the Truth, *eṣā netrī rādhasaḥ sūnṛtānām* (VII.76.7). This wealth for which the Rishis pray is described under the figure of material riches; it is *gomad aśvāvad vīravad* or it is *gomad aśvāvad rathavac ca rādhaḥ*. *Go*, the cow, *aśva*, the horse, *prajā* or *apatya*, the offspring, *nṛ* or *vīra*, the man or hero, *hiraṇya*, gold, *ratha*, the chariot, *śravas*, — food or fame, according to the ritualist interpretation, — these are the constituents of the wealth desired by the Vedic sages. Nothing, it would seem, could be more matter-of-fact, earthy, material; these are indeed the blessings for which a race of lusty barbarians full of vigorous appetite, avid of earth's goods would pray to their primitive gods. But we have seen that *hiraṇya* is used in another sense than that of earthly gold. We have seen that the "cows" return constantly in connection with the Dawn as a figure for the Light and we have seen that this light is connected with mental vision and with the truth that brings the bliss. And *aśva*, the horse, is always in these concrete images of psychological suggestions coupled with the symbolic figure of the cow: Dawn is *gomatī aśvāvatī*. Vasishtha has a verse (VII.77.3) in which the symbolic sense of the Vedic Horse comes out with great power and clearness, —

Devānāṁ cakṣuḥ subhagā vahantī,
śvetaṁ nayantī sudṛśīkam aśvam;
Uṣā adarśi raśmibhir vyaktā,
citrāmaghā viśvam anu prabhūtā.

"Happy, bringing the gods' eye of vision, leading the white Horse that has perfect sight, Dawn is seen expressed entirely by the rays, full of her varied riches, manifesting her birth in all things." It is clear enough that the white horse (a phrase applied to the god Agni who is the Seer-Will, *kavikratu*, the

perfectly-seeing force of divine will in its works, V.1.4) is entirely symbolical[2] and that the "varied riches" she brings with her are also a figure and certainly do not mean physical wealth.

Dawn is described as *gomatī aśvāvatī vīravatī*; and since the epithets *gomatī* and *aśvāvatī* applied to her are symbolical and mean not "cowful and horsed", but radiant with illuminations of knowledge and accompanied by the swiftnesses of force, so *vīravatī* cannot mean "man-accompanied" or accompanied by heroes or servants or sons, but rather signifies that she is attended by conquering energies or at any rate is used in some kindred and symbolic sense. This becomes quite evident in I.113.18, *yā gomatīr uṣasaḥ sarvavīrāḥ . . . tā aśvadā aśnavat somasutvā*. It does not mean "the Dawns that have cows and all men or all servants, those a man, having offered the Soma, enjoys as horse-givers." The Dawn is the inner dawn which brings to man all the varied fullnesses of his widest being, force, consciousness, joy; it is radiant with its illuminations, it is accompanied by all possible powers and energies, it gives man the full force of vitality so that he can enjoy the infinite delight of that vaster existence.

We can no longer take *gomad aśvāvad vīravad rādhaḥ* in a physical sense; the very language of the Veda points us to quite another truth. Therefore the other circumstances of this god-given wealth must be taken equally in a spiritual significance; the offspring, gold, chariots are symbolical; *śravas* is not fame or food, but bears its psychological sense and means the higher knowledge which comes not to the senses or the intellect, but to the divine hearing and the divine vision of the Truth; *rādho dīrghaśruttamam*, *rayiṁ śravasyum* is that rich state of being, that spiritually opulent felicity which turns towards the knowledge (*śravasyu*) and has a far-extended hearing for the vibrations of the Word that comes to us from the regions (*diśaḥ*) of the Infinite. Thus the luminous figure of the Dawn liberates

[2] The symbolism of the horse is quite evident in the hymns of Dirghatamas to the Horse of the Sacrifice, the hymns of various Rishis to the Horse Dadhikravan and again in the opening of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad in which "Dawn is the head of the Horse" is the first phrase of a very elaborate figure.

us from the material, ritual, ignorant misunderstanding of the Veda which would lead us stumbling from pitfall to pitfall in a very night of chaos and obscurity; it opens to us the closed door and admits to the heart of the Vedic knowledge.

Chapter XIV

The Cow and the Angiras Legend

WE MUST now pursue this image of the Cow which we are using as a key to the sense of the Veda, into the striking Vedic parable or legend of the Angiras Rishis, on the whole the most important of all the Vedic myths.

The Vedic hymns, whatever else they may be, are throughout an invocation to certain "Aryan" gods, friends and helpers of man, for ends which are held by the singers, — or seers, as they call themselves (*kavi*, *ṛṣi*, *vipra*), — to be supremely desirable (*vara*, *vāra*). These desirable ends, these boons of the gods are summed up in the words *rayi*, *rādhas*, which may mean physically wealth or prosperity, and psychologically a felicity or enjoyment which consists in the abundance of certain forms of spiritual wealth. Man contributes as his share of the joint effort the work of the sacrifice, the Word, the Soma Wine and the *ghṛta* or clarified butter. The Gods are born in the sacrifice, they increase by the Word, the Wine and the Ghrita and in that strength and in the ecstasy and intoxication of the Wine they accomplish the aims of the sacrificer. The chief elements of the wealth thus acquired are the Cow and the Horse; but there are also others, *hiraṇya*, gold, *vīra*, men or heroes, *ratha*, chariots, *prajā* or *apatya*, offspring. The very means of the sacrifice, the fire, the Soma, the *ghṛta*, are supplied by the Gods and they attend the sacrifice as its priests, purifiers, upholders, heroes of its warfare, — for there are those who hate the sacrifice and the Word, attack the sacrificer and tear or withhold from him the coveted wealth. The chief conditions of the prosperity so ardently desired are the rising of the Dawn and the Sun and the downpour of the rain of heaven and of the seven rivers, — physical or mystic, — called in the Veda the Mighty Ones of heaven. But even this prosperity, this fullness of cows, horses, gold, men, chariots, offspring, is not a final end in itself; all

this is a means towards the opening up of the other worlds, the winning of Swar, the ascent to the solar heavens, the attainment by the path of the Truth to the Light and to the heavenly Bliss where the mortal arrives at Immortality.

Such is the undoubted substance of the Veda. The ritual and mythological sense which has been given to it from very ancient times is well known and need not be particularised; in sum, it is the performance of sacrificial worship as the chief duty of man with a view to the enjoyment of wealth here and heaven hereafter. We know also the modern view of the matter in which the Veda is a worship of the personified sun, moon, stars, dawn, wind, rain, fire, sky, rivers and other deities of Nature, the propitiation of these gods by sacrifice, the winning and holding of wealth in this life, chiefly from human and Dravidian enemies and against hostile demons and mortal plunderers, and after death man's attainment to the Paradise of the gods. We now find, that however valid these ideas may have been for the vulgar, they were not the inner sense of the Veda to the seers, the illumined minds (*kavi*, *vipra*) of the Vedic age. For them these material objects were symbols of the immaterial; the cows were the radiances or illuminations of a divine Dawn, the horses and chariots were symbols of force and movement, gold was light, the shining wealth of a divine Sun — the true light, *ṛtaṁ jyotiḥ*; both the wealth acquired by the sacrifice and the sacrifice itself in all their details symbolised man's effort and his means towards a greater end, the acquisition of immortality. The aspiration of the Vedic seer was the enrichment and expansion of man's being, the birth and the formation of the godheads in his life-sacrifice, the increase of the Force, Truth, Light, Joy of which they are the powers until through the enlarged and ever-opening worlds of his being the soul of man rises, sees the divine doors (*devīr dvārah̤*) swing open to his call and enters into the supreme felicity of a divine existence beyond heaven and earth. This ascent is the parable of the Angiras Rishis.

All the gods are conquerors and givers of the Cow, the Horse and the divine riches, but it is especially the great deity Indra who is the hero and fighter in this warfare and who wins for man

the Light and the Force. Therefore Indra is constantly addressed as the Master of the herds, *gopati*; he is even imaged as himself the cow and the horse; he is the good milker whom the Rishi wishes to milk and what he yields are perfect forms and ultimate thoughts; he is Vrishabha, the Bull of the herds; his is the wealth of cows and horses which man covets. It is even said in VI.28.5, "O people, these that are the cows, they are Indra; it is Indra I desire with my heart and with my mind." This identification of the cows and Indra is important and we shall have to return to it, when we deal with Madhuchchhandas' hymns to that deity.

But ordinarily the Rishis image the acquisition of this wealth as a conquest effected against certain powers, the Dasyus, sometimes represented as possessing the coveted riches which have to be ravished from them by violence, sometimes as stealing them from the Aryan who has then to discover and recover the lost wealth by the aid of the gods. The Dasyus who withhold or steal the cows are called the Panis, a word which seems originally to have meant doers, dealers or traffickers; but this significance is sometimes coloured by its further sense of "misers". Their chief is Vala, a demon whose name signifies probably the circumscriber or "encloser", as Vritra means the opponent, obstructer or enfolding coverer. It is easy to suggest, as do the scholars who would read as much primitive history as possible into the Veda, that the Panis are the Dravidians and Vala is their chief or god. But this sense can only be upheld in isolated passages; in many hymns it is incompatible with the actual words of the Rishis and turns into a jumble of gaudy nonsense their images and figures. We have seen something of this incompatibility already; it will become clearer to us as we examine more closely the mythus of the lost cows.

Vala dwells in a lair, a hole (*bila*) in the mountains; Indra and the Angiras Rishis have to pursue him there and force him to give up his wealth; for he is Vala of the cows, *valaṁ gomantam*. The Panis also are represented as concealing the stolen herds in a cave of the mountain which is called their concealing prison, *vavra*, or the pen of the cows, *vraja*, or sometimes in a significant phrase, *gavyam ūrvam*, literally the cowey wideness or in

the other sense of *go* "the luminous wideness", the vast wealth of the shining herds. To recover this lost wealth the sacrifice has to be performed; the Angirases or else Brihaspati and the Angirases have to chant the true word, the *mantra*; Sarama the heavenly hound has to find out the cows in the cave of the Panis; Indra strong with the Soma wine and the Angirases, the seers, his companions, have to follow the track, enter the cave or violently break open the strong places of the hill, defeat the Panis and drive upward the delivered herds.

Let us, first, take note of certain features which ought not to be overlooked when we seek to determine the interpretation of this parable or this myth. In the first place the legend, however precise in its images, is not yet in the Veda a simple mythological tradition, but is used with a certain freedom and fluidity which betrays the significant image behind the sacred tradition. Often it is stripped of the mythological aspect and applied to the personal need or aspiration of the singer. For it is an action of which Indra is always capable; although he has done it once for all in the type by means of the Angirases, yet he repeats the type continually even in the present, he is constantly the seeker of the cows, *gaveṣaṇa*, and the restorer of the stolen wealth.

Sometimes we have simply the fact of the stolen cows and the recovery by Indra without any reference to Sarama or the Angirases or the Panis. But it is not always Indra who recovers the herds. We have for instance a hymn to Agni, the second of the fifth Mandala, a hymn of the Atris, in which the singer applies the image of the stolen cows to himself in a language which clearly betrays its symbolism. Agni, long repressed in her womb by mother Earth who is unwilling to give him to the father Heaven, held and concealed in her so long as she is compressed into limited form (*peṣī*), at length comes to birth when she becomes great and vast (*mahiṣī*). The birth of Agni is associated with a manifestation or vision of luminous herds. "I beheld afar in a field one shaping his weapons who was golden-tusked and pure-bright of hue; I give to him the Amrita (the immortal essence, Soma) in separate parts; what shall they do to me who have not Indra and have not the word? I beheld

in the field as it were a happy herd ranging continuously, many, shining; they seized them not, for *he* was born; even those (cows) that were old, become young again." But if these Dasyus who have not Indra, nor the word, are at present powerless to seize on the luminous herds, it was otherwise before this bright and formidable godhead was born. "Who were they that divorced my strength (*maryakam*; my host of men, my heroes, *vīra*) from the cows? for they (my men) had no warrior and protector of the kine. Let those who took them from me, release them; he knows and comes driving to us the cattle."

What, we may fairly ask, are these shining herds, these cows who were old and become young again? Certainly, they are not physical herds, nor is it any earthly field by the Yamuna or the Jhelum that is the scene of this splendid vision of the golden-tusked warrior god and the herds of the shining cattle. They are the herds either of the physical or of the divine Dawn and the language suits ill with the former interpretation; this mystical vision is surely a figure of the divine illumination. They are radiances that were stolen by the powers of darkness and are now divinely recovered not by the god of the physical fire, but by the flaming Force which was concealed in the littleness of the material existence and is now liberated into the clarities of an illumined mental action.

Indra is not, then, the only god who can break up the tenebrous cave and restore the lost radiances. There are other deities to whom various hymns make the attribution of this great victory. Usha is one of them, the divine Dawn, mother of these herds. "True with the gods who are true, great with the gods who are great, sacrificial godhead with the gods sacrificial, she breaks open the strong places, she gives of the shining herds; the cows low towards the Dawn!" (VII.75.7). Agni is another; sometimes he wars by himself as we have already seen, sometimes along with Indra — "Ye two warred over the cows, O Indra, O Agni" (VI.60.2) — or, again, with Soma, — "O Agni and Soma, that heroic might of yours was made conscient when ye robbed the Pani of the cows" (I.93.4). Soma in another passage is associated in this victory with Indra; "This god born by force stayed, with

Indra as his comrade, the Pani" and performed all the exploits of the gods warring against the Dasyus (VI.44.22). The Ashwins also are credited with the same achievement in VI.62.11, "Ye two open the doors of the strong pen full of the kine" and again in I.112.18, "O Angiras, (the twin Ashwins are sometimes unified in a single appellation), ye two take delight by the mind and enter first in the opening of the stream of the cows," where the sense is evidently the liberated, outflowing stream or sea of the Light.

Brihaspati is more frequently the hero of this victory. "Brihaspati, coming first into birth from the great Light in the supreme ether, seven-mouthed, multiply-born, seven-rayed, dispelled the darknesses; he with his host that possess the *stubh* and the Rik broke Vala into pieces by his cry. Shouting Brihaspati drove upwards the bright herds that speed the offering and they lowed in reply" (IV.50). And again in VI.73.1 and 3, "Brihaspati who is the hill-breaker, the first-born, the Angirasa. . . . Brihaspati conquered the treasures (*vasūni*), great pens this god won full of the kine." The Maruts also, singers of the Rik like Brihaspati, are associated, though less directly in this divine action. "He whom ye foster, O Maruts, shall break open the pen" (VI.66.8), and elsewhere we hear of the cows of the Maruts (I.38.2). Pushan, the Increaser, a form of the sun-god is also invoked for the pursuit and recovery of the stolen cattle, (VI.54); "Let Pushan follow after our kine, let him protect our war-steeds. . . . Pushan, go thou after the kine. . . . Let him drive back to us that which was lost." Even Saraswati becomes a slayer of the Panis. And in Madhuchchhandas' hymn (I.11.5) we have this striking image, "O lord of the thunderbolt, thou didst uncover the hole of Vala of the cows; the gods, unfearing, entered speeding (or putting forth their force) into thee."

Is there a definite sense in these variations which will bind them together into a single coherent idea or is it at random that the Rishis invoke now this and now the other deity in the search and war for their lost cattle? If we will consent to take the ideas of the Veda as a whole instead of bewildering ourselves in the play of separate detail, we shall find a very simple and sufficient

answer. This matter of the lost herds is only part of a whole system of connected symbols and images. They are recovered by the sacrifice and the fiery god Agni is the flame, the power and the priest of the sacrifice; — by the Word, and Brihaspati is the father of the Word, the Maruts its singers or Brahmas, *brahmāṇo marutaḥ*, Saraswati its inspiration; — by the Wine, and Soma is the god of the Wine and the Ashwins its seekers, finders, givers, drinkers. The herds are the herds of Light and the Light comes by the Dawn and by the Sun of whom Pushan is a form. Finally, Indra is the head of all these gods, lord of the light, king of the luminous heaven called Swar, — he is, we say, the luminous or divine Mind; into him all the gods enter and take part in his unveiling of the hidden light. We see therefore that there is a perfect appropriateness in the attribution of one and the same victory to these different deities and in Madhuchchhandas' image of the gods entering into Indra for the stroke against Vala. Nothing has been done at random or in obedience to a confused fluidity of ideas. The Veda is perfect and beautiful in its coherence and its unity.

Moreover, the conquest of the Light is only part of the great action of the Vedic sacrifice. The gods have to win by it all the boons (*viśvā vāryā*) which are necessary for the conquest of immortality and the emergence of the hidden illuminations is only one of these. Force, the Horse, is as necessary as Light, the Cow; not only must Vala be reached and the light won from his jealous grasp, but Vritra must be slain and the waters released; the emergence of the shining herds means the rising of the Dawn and the Sun; that again is incomplete without the sacrifice, the fire, the wine. All these things are different members of one action, sometimes mentioned separately, sometimes in groups, sometimes together as if in a single action, a grand total conquest. And the result of their possession is the revelation of the vast Truth and the conquest of Swar, the luminous world, called frequently the wide other world, *urum u lokam* or simply *u lokam*. We must grasp this unity first if we are to understand the separate introduction of these symbols in the various passages of the Rig Veda.

Thus in VI.73 which has already been cited, we find a brief hymn of three verses in which these symbols are briefly put together in their unity; it might almost be described as one of the mnemonic hymns of the Veda which serve to keep in mind the unity of its sense and its symbolism. "He who is the hill-breaker, first-born, possessed of the truth, Brihaspati, the Angirasa, the giver of the oblation, pervader of the two worlds, dweller in the heat and light (of the sun), our father, roars aloud as the Bull to the two firmaments. Brihaspati who for man the voyager has fashioned that other world in the calling of the gods, slaying the Vritra-forces breaks open the cities, conquering foes and over-powering unfriends in his battles. Brihaspati conquers for him the treasures, great pens this god wins full of the kine, seeking the conquest of the world of Swar, unassailable; Brihaspati slays the Foe by the hymns of illumination (*arkaiḥ*)." We see at once the unity of this many-sided symbolism.

Another passage more mystic in its language brings in the idea of the dawn and the restoration or new-birth of light in the sun which are not expressly mentioned in the brief hymn to Brihaspati. It is in the praise of Soma of which the opening phrase has already been cited, VI.44.22; "This god born by force stayed with Indra as his comrade the Pani; he it was wrested from his own unblest father (the divided being) his weapons of war and his forms of knowledge (*māyāḥ*), he it was made the Dawns glorious in their lord, he it was created in the Sun the Light within, he it was found the triple principle (of immortality) in heaven in its regions of splendour (the three worlds of Swar) and in the tripartite worlds the hidden immortality (this is the giving of the Amrita in separate parts alluded to in the Atris' hymn to Agni, the threefold offering of the Soma given on the three levels, *triṣu sānuṣu*, body, life and mind); he it was supported widely heaven and earth, he it was fashioned the car with the seven rays; he it was held by his force the ripe yield (of the *madhu* or *ghṛta*) in the cows, even the fountain of the ten movements." It certainly seems astonishing to me that so many acute and eager minds should have read such hymns as these without realising that they are the sacred poems of symbolists and mystics, not

of Nature-worshipping barbarians or of rude Aryan invaders warring with the civilised and Vedantic Dravidians.

Let us now pass rapidly through certain other passages in which there is a more scattered collocation of these symbols. First, we find that in this image of the cavern-pen in the hill, as elsewhere, the Cow and Horse go together. We have seen Pushan called upon to seek for the cows and protect the horses. The two forms of the Aryan's wealth always at the mercy of marauders? But let us see. "So in thy ecstasy of the Soma thou didst break open, O hero (Indra), the pen of the Cow and the Horse, like a city" (VIII.32.5). "Break open for us the thousands of the Cow and the Horse" (VIII.34.14). "That which thou holdest, O Indra, the Cow and the Horse and the imperishable enjoyment, confirm that in the sacrificer and not in the Pani; he who lies in the slumber, doing not the work and seeking not the gods, let him perish by his own impulsions; thereafter confirm perpetually (in us) the wealth that must increase" (VIII.97.2 and 3). In another hymn the Panis are said to withhold the wealth of cows and horses. Always they are powers who receive the coveted wealth but do not use it, preferring to slumber, avoiding the divine action (*vrata*), and they are powers who must perish or be conquered before the wealth can be securely possessed by the sacrificer. And always the Cow and the Horse represent a concealed and imprisoned wealth which has to be uncovered and released by a divine puissance.

With the conquest of the shining herds is also associated the conquest or the birth or illumination of the Dawn and the Sun, but this is a point whose significance we shall have to consider in another chapter. And associated with the Herds, the Dawn and the Sun are the Waters; for the slaying of Vritra with the release of the waters and the defeat of Vala with the release of the herds are two companion and not unconnected myths. In certain passages even, as in I.32.4, the slaying of Vritra is represented as the preliminary to the birth of the Sun, the Dawn and Heaven, and in others the opening of the Hill to the flowing of the Waters. For the general connection we may note the following passages: VII.90.4, "The Dawns broke forth perfect in their shining and

unhurt; meditating they (the Angirases) found the wide Light; they who desire opened the wideness of the cows and the waters for them flowed forth from heaven"; I.72.8, "By right thought the seven Mighty Ones of heaven (the seven rivers) knew the truth and knew the doors of bliss; Sarama found the strong wideness of the cows and by that the human creature enjoys"; I.100.18, of Indra and the Maruts, "He with his shining companions won the field, won the Sun, won the waters"; V.14.4, of Agni, "Agni, born, shone out slaying the Dasyus, by the Light the Darkness; he found the cows, the waters and Swar"; VI.60.2, of Indra and Agni, "Ye two warred over the cows, the waters, Swar, the dawns that were ravished; O Indra, O Agni, thou unitest (to us) the regions, Swar, the brilliant dawns, the waters and the cows"; I.32.12, of Indra, "O hero, thou didst conquer the cow, thou didst conquer the Soma; thou didst loose forth to their flowing the seven rivers."

In the last passage we see Soma coupled with the cows among the conquests of Indra. Usually the Soma intoxication is the strength in which Indra conquers the cows; e.g. III.43.7, the Soma "in the intoxication of which thou didst open up the cowpens"; II.15.8, "He, hymned by the Angirases, broke Vala and hurled apart the strong places of the hill; he severed their artificial obstructions; these things Indra did in the intoxication of the Soma." Sometimes, however, the working is reversed and it is the Light that brings the bliss of the Soma wine or they come together as in I.62.5, "Hymned by the Angirases, O achiever of works, thou didst open the dawns with (or by) the Sun and with (or by) the cows the Soma."

Agni is also, like the Soma, an indispensable element of the sacrifice and therefore we find Agni too included in these formulas of association, as in VII.99.4. "Ye made that wide other world for (as the goal of) the sacrifice, bringing into being the Sun and the Dawn and Agni," and we have the same formula in III.31.15 with the addition of the Path and in VII.44.3 with the addition of the cow.

From these examples it will appear how closely the different symbols and parables of the Veda are connected with each other

and we shall therefore miss the true road of interpretation if we treat the legend of the Angirases and the Panis as an isolated mythus which we can interpret at our pleasure without careful regard to its setting in the general thought of the Veda and the light that that general thought casts upon the figured language in which the legend is recounted.

Chapter XV

The Lost Sun and the Lost Cows

THE CONQUEST or recovery of the Sun and the Dawn is a frequent subject of allusion in the hymns of the Rig Veda. Sometimes it is the finding of Surya, sometimes the finding or conquest of Swar, the world of Surya. Sayana, indeed, takes the word Swar as a synonym of Surya; but it is perfectly clear from several passages that Swar is the name of a world or supreme Heaven above the ordinary heaven and earth. Sometimes indeed it is used for the solar light proper both to Surya and to the world which is formed by his illumination. We have seen that the waters which descend from Heaven or which are conquered and enjoyed by Indra and the mortals who are befriended by him, are described as *svarvatīr apaḥ*. Sayana, taking these *apaḥ* for physical waters, was bound to find another meaning for *svarvatīḥ* and he declares that it means *saraṇavatīḥ*, moving; but this is obviously a forced sense which the word itself does not suggest and can hardly bear. The thunderbolt of Indra is called the heavenly stone, *svaryam aśmānam*; its light, that is to say, is the light from this world of the solar splendours. Indra himself is *svarpati*, the master of Swar, of the luminous world.

Moreover, as we see that the finding and recovery of the Cows is usually described as the work of Indra, often with the aid of the Angiras Rishis and by the instrumentality of the *mantra* and the sacrifice, of Agni and Soma, so also the finding and recovery of the sun is attributed to the same agencies. Moreover the two actions are continually associated together. We have, it seems to me, overwhelming evidence in the Veda itself that all these things constitute really one great action of which they are parts. The Cows are the hidden rays of the Dawn or of Surya; their rescue out of the darkness leads to or is the sign of the uprising of the sun that was hidden in the darkness; this again is the condition, always with the instrumentality of the sacrifice,

its circumstances and its helping gods, of the conquest of Swar, the supreme world of Light. So much results beyond doubt, it seems to me, from the language of the Veda itself; but also that language points to this Sun being a symbol of the divine illumining Power, Swar the world of the divine Truth and the conquest of divine Truth the real aim of the Vedic Rishis and the subject of their hymns. I will now examine as rapidly as possible the evidence which points towards this conclusion.

First of all, we see that Swar and Surya are different conceptions in the minds of the Vedic Rishis, but always closely connected. We have for instance the verse in Bharadwaja's hymn to Soma and Indra, VI.72.1, "Ye found the Sun, ye found Swar, ye slew all darkness and limitations" and in a hymn of Vamadeva to Indra, IV.16, which celebrates this achievement of Indra and the Angirases, "When by the hymns of illumination (*arkaiḥ*) Swar was found, entirely visible, when they (the Angirases) made to shine the great light out of the night, he (Indra) made the darknesses ill-assured (i.e. loosened their firm hold) so that men might have vision." In the first passage we see that Swar and Surya are different from each other and that Swar is not merely another name for Surya; but at the same time the finding of Swar and the finding of Surya are represented as closely connected and indeed one movement and the result is the slaying of all darkness and limitations. So in the second passage the finding and making visible of Swar is associated with the shining of a great light out of the darkness, which we find from parallel passages to be the recovery, by the Angirases, of the Sun that was lying concealed in the darkness. Surya is found by the Angirases through the power of their hymns or true *mantras*; Swar also is found and made visible by the hymns of the Angirases, *arkaiḥ*. It is clear therefore that the substance of Swar is a great light and that that light is the light of Surya the Sun.

We might even suppose that Swar is a word for the sun, light or the sky if it were not clear from other passages that it is the name of a world. It is frequently alluded to as a world beyond the Rodasi, beyond heaven and earth, and is otherwise called the wide world, *uru loka*, or the wide other world, *uru u loka*, or

simply that (other) world, *u loka*. This world is described as one of vast light and of a wide freedom from fear where the cows, the rays of Surya, disport themselves freely. So in VI.47.8, we have "Thou in thy knowledge leadest us on to the wide world, even Swar, the Light which is freedom from fear, with happy being," *svar jyotir abhayaṁ svasti*. In III.2.7, Agni Vaishwanara is described as filling the earth and heaven and the vast Swar, *ā rodasī apṛṇad ā svar mahat*; and so also Vasishtha says in his hymn to Vishnu, VII.99, "Thou didst support firmly, O Vishnu, this earth and heaven and uphold the earth all around by the rays (of Surya). Ye two created for the sacrifice (i.e. as its result) the wide other world (*urum u lokam*), bringing into being the Sun, the Dawn and Agni," where we again see the close connection of Swar, the wide world, with the birth or appearance of the Sun and the Dawn. It is described as the result of the sacrifice, the end of our pilgrimage, the vast home to which we arrive, the other world to which those who do well the works of sacrifice attain, *sukṛtām u lokam*. Agni goes as an envoy between earth and heaven and then encompasses with his being this vast home, *kṣayaṁ bṛhantaṁ pari bhūṣati*, (III.3.2). It is a world of bliss and the fullness of all the riches to which the Vedic Rishi aspires: "He for whom, because he does well his works, O Agni Jatavedas, thou willest to make that other world of bliss, attains to a felicity full of the Horses, the Sons, the Heroes, the Cows, all happy being" (V.4.11). And it is by the Light that this Bliss is attained; it is by bringing to Birth the Sun and the Dawn and the Days that the Angirases attain to it for the desiring human race; "Indra who winneth Swar, bringing to birth the days, has conquered by those who desire (*uśigbhiḥ*, a word applied like *nṛ* to express men and gods, but, like *nṛ* also, sometimes especially indicating the Angirases) the armies he attacks, and he has made to shine out for man the vision of the days (*ketum ahnām*) and found the Light for the great bliss," *avindaj jyotir bṛhate raṇāya* (III.34.4).

All this may very well be interpreted, so far as these and other isolated passages go, as a sort of Red Indian conception of a physical world beyond the sky and the earth, a world made out

of the rays of the sun, in which the human being, freed from fear and limitation, — it is a wide world, — has his desires satisfied and possesses quite an unlimited number of horses, cows, sons and retainers. But what we have set out to prove is that it is not so, that on the contrary, this wide world, *bṛhad dyau* or Swar, which we have to attain by passing beyond heaven and earth, — for so it is more than once stated, e.g. I.36.8, "Human beings (*manuṣaḥ*) slaying the Coverer have crossed beyond both earth and heaven and made the wide world for their dwelling place," *ghnanto vṛtram ataran rodasī apa uru kṣayāya cakrire*, — that this supra-celestial wideness, this illimitable light is a supramental heaven, the heaven of the supramental Truth, of the immortal Beatitude, and that the light which is its substance and constituent reality, is the light of Truth. But at present it is enough to emphasise this point that it is a heaven concealed from our vision by a certain darkness, that it has to be found and made visible, and that this seeing and finding depends on the birth of the Dawn, the rising of the Sun, the upsurging of the Solar Herds out of their secret cave. The souls successful in sacrifice become *svardṛś* and *svarvid*, seers of Swar and finders of Swar or its knowers; for *vid* is a root which means both to find or get and to know and in one or two passages the less ambiguous root *jñā* is substituted for it and the Veda even speaks of making the light known out of the darkness. For the rest, this question of the nature of Swar or the wide world is of supreme importance for the interpretation of the Veda, since on it turns the whole difference between the theory of a hymnal of barbarians and the theory of a book of ancient knowledge, a real Veda. It can only be entirely dealt with in a discussion of the hundred and more passages speaking of this wide world which would be quite beyond the scope of these chapters. We shall, however, have to return to this question while dealing with the Angiras hymns and afterwards.

The birth of the Sun and the Dawn must therefore be regarded as the condition of seeing or attaining to Swar, and it is this which explains the immense importance attached to this legend or image in the Veda and to the conception of the

illumining, finding, bringing to birth of the light out of the darkness by the true hymn, the *satya mantra*. This is done by Indra and the Angirases, and numerous are the passages that allude to it. Indra and the Angirases are described as finding Swar or the Sun, *avindat*, illumining or making it to shine, *arocayat*, bringing it to birth, *ajanayat*, (we must remember that in the Veda the manifestation of the gods in the sacrifice is constantly described as their birth); and winning and possessing it, *sanat*. Often indeed Indra alone is mentioned. It is he who makes light from the nights and brings into birth the Sun, *kṣapāṁ vastā janitā sūryasya* (III.49.4), he who has brought to their birth the Sun and the Dawn (II.12.7), or, in a more ample phrase, brings to birth together the Sun and Heaven and Dawn (VI.30.5). By his shining he illumines the Dawn, by his shining he makes to blaze out the sun, *haryann uṣasam arcayaḥ sūryaṁ haryann arocayaḥ* (III.44.2). These are his great achievements, *jajāna sūryam uṣasaṁ sudaṁsāḥ* (III.32.8), that with his shining comrades he wins for possession the field (is this not the field in which the Atri saw the shining cows?), wins the sun, wins the waters, *sanat kṣetraṁ sakhibhiḥ śvitnyebhiḥ sanat sūryaṁ sanad apaḥ suvajraḥ* (I.100.18). He is also he who winneth Swar, *svarṣā*, as we have seen, by bringing to birth the days. In isolated passages we might take this birth of the Sun as referring to the original creation of the sun by the gods, but not when we take these and other passages together. This birth is his birth in conjunction with the Dawn, his birth out of the Night. It is by the sacrifice that this birth takes place, — *indraḥ suyajña uṣasaḥ svar janat* (II.21.4), "Indra sacrificing well brought to birth the Dawns and Swar"; it is by human aid that it is done, — *asmākebhir nṛbhiḥ sūryaṁ sanat*, by our "men" he wins the sun (I.100.6); and in many hymns it is described as the result of the work of the Angirases and is associated with the delivering of the cows or the breaking of the hill.

It is this circumstance among others that prevents us from taking, as we might otherwise have taken, the birth or finding of the Sun as simply a description of the sky (Indra) daily recovering the sun at dawn. When it is said of him that he finds the light

even in the blind darkness, *so andhe cit tamasi jyotir vidat*, it is evident that the reference is to the same light which Agni and Soma found, one light for all these many creatures, *avindataṁ jyotir ekaṁ bahubhyaḥ*, when they stole the cows from the Panis (I.93.4), "the wakeful light which they who increase truth brought into birth, a god for the god" (VIII.89.1), the secret light (*gūḍhaṁ jyotiḥ*) which the fathers, the Angirases, found when by their true mantras they brought to birth the Dawn. It is that which is referred to in the mystic hymn to all the gods (VIII.29.10) attributed to Manu Vaivaswata or to Kashyapa, in which it is said, "Certain of them singing the Rik thought out the mighty Sāman and by that they made the Sun to shine." This is not represented as being done previous to the creation of man; for it is said in VII.91.1, "The gods who increase by our obeisance and were of old, without blame, they for man beset (by the powers of darkness) made the Dawn to shine by the Sun." This is the finding of the Sun that was dwelling in the darkness by the Angirases through their ten months' sacrifice. Whatever may have been the origin of the image or legend, it is an old one and widespread and it supposes a long obscuration of the Sun during which man was beset by darkness. We find it not only among the Aryans of India, but among the Mayas of America whose civilisation was a ruder and perhaps earlier type of the Egyptian culture; there too it is the same legend of the Sun concealed for many months in the darkness and recovered by the hymns and prayers of the wise men (the Angiras Rishis?). In the Veda the recovery of the Light is first effected by the Angirases, the seven sages, the ancient human fathers and is then constantly repeated in human experience by their agency.

It will appear from this analysis that the legend of the lost Sun and its recovery by sacrifice and by the *mantra* and the legend of the lost Cows and their recovery, also by the *mantra*, both carried out by Indra and the Angirases, are not two different myths, they are one. We have already asserted this identity while discussing the relations of the Cows and the Dawn. The Cows are the rays of the Dawn, the herds of the Sun and not physical cattle. The lost Cows are the lost rays of the Sun; their

recovery is the forerunner of the recovery of the lost sun. But it is now necessary to put this identity beyond all possible doubt by the clear statement of the Veda itself.

For the Veda does explicitly tell us that the cows are the Light and the pen in which they are hidden is the darkness. Not only have we the passage already quoted, I.92.4, in which the purely metaphorical character of the cows and the pen is indicated, "Dawn uncovered the darkness like the pen of the cow"; not only have we the constant connection of the image of the recovery of the cows with the finding of the light as in I.93.4, "Ye two stole the cows from the Panis. . . . Ye found the one light for many", or in II.24.3, "That is the work to be done for the most divine of the gods; the firm places were cast down, the fortified places were made weak; up Brihaspati drove the cows (rays), by the hymn (*brahmaṇā*) he broke Vala, he concealed the darkness, he made Swar visible"; not only are we told in V.31.3, "He impelled forward the good milkers within the concealing pen, he opened up by the Light the all-concealing darkness"; but, in case any one should tell us that there is no connection in the Veda between one clause of a sentence and another and that the Rishis are hopping about with minds happily liberated from the bonds of sense and reason from the Cows to the Sun and from the darkness to the cave of the Dravidians, we have in answer the absolute identification in I.33.10, "Indra the Bull made the thunderbolt his ally" or perhaps "made it applied (*yujam*), he by the Light milked the rays (cows) out of the darkness," — we must remember that the thunderbolt is the *svarya aśmā* and has the light of Swar in it, — and again in IV.51.2, where there is question of the Panis, "They (the Dawns) breaking into dawn pure, purifying, opened the doors of the pen, even of the darkness," *vrajasya tamaso dvārā*. If in face of all these passages we insist on making a historical myth of the Cows and the Panis, it will be because we are determined to make the Veda mean that in spite of the evidence of the Veda itself. Otherwise we must admit that this supreme hidden wealth of the Panis, *nidhiṁ paṇīnāṁ paramaṁ guhā hitam* (II.24.6), is not wealth of earthly herds, but, as is clearly stated by Paruchchhepa

Daivodasi (I.130.3), "the treasure of heaven hidden in the secret cavern like the young of the Bird, within the infinite rock, like a pen of the cows", *avindad divo nihitaṁ guhā nidhiṁ ver na garbhaṁ parivītam aśmani anante antar aśmani, vrajaṁ vajrī gavām iva siṣāsan.*

The passages in which the connection of the two legends or their identity appear, are numerous; I will only cite a few that are typical. We have in one of the hymns that speak at length of this legend, I.62, "O Indra, O Puissant, thou with the Dashagwas (the Angirases) didst tear Vala with the cry; hymned by the Angirases, thou didst open the Dawns with the Sun and with the Cows the Soma." We have VI.17.3, "Hear the hymn and increase by the words; make manifest the Sun, slay the foe, cleave out the Cows, O Indra." We read in VII.98.6, "All this wealth of cows that thou seest around thee by the eye of the Sun is thine, thou art the sole lord of the cows, O Indra," *gavām asi gopatir eka indra*, and to show of what kind of cows Indra is the lord, we have in III.31, a hymn of Sarama and the Cows, "The victorious (Dawns) clove to him and they knew a great light out of the darkness; knowing the Dawns went upward to him, Indra became the sole lord of the Cows," *patir gavām abhavad eka indraḥ*, and the hymn goes on to tell how it was by the mind and by the discovery of the whole path of the Truth that the seven sages, the Angirases drove up the Cows out of their strong prison and how Sarama, knowing, came to the cavern in the hill and to the voice of the imperishable herds. We have the same connection with the Dawns and the finding of the wide solar light of Swar in VII.90.4, "The Dawns broke forth perfect in light and unhurt, they (the Angirases) meditating found the wide Light (*uru jyotiḥ*); they who desire opened the wideness of the Cows, the waters flowed on them from heaven."

So too in II.19.3 we have the Days and the Sun and the Cows, — "He brought to its birth the Sun, found the Cows, effecting out of the Night the manifestations of the days." In IV.1, the Dawns and the Cows are identified, "The good milkers whose pen was the rock, the shining ones in their concealing prison they drove upward, the Dawns answering their call,"

unless this means, as is possible, that the Dawns called by the Angirases, "our human fathers", who are mentioned in the preceding verse, drove up for them the Cows. Then in VI.17.5 we have the breaking of the pen as the means of the outshining of the Sun; "Thou didst make the Sun and the Dawn to shine, breaking the firm places; thou didst move from its foundation the great hill that enveloped the Cows"; and finally in III.39 the absolute identification of the two images in their legendary form, "None is there among mortals who can blame (or, as I should rather interpret, no mortal power that can confine or obstruct) these our fathers who fought for the Cows (of the Panis); Indra of the mightiness, Indra of the works released for them the strongly closed cow-pens; when a friend with his friends the Navagwas, following on his knees the cows, when with the ten, the Dashagwas, Indra found the true Sun (or, as I render it, the Truth, the Sun,) dwelling in the darkness." The passage is conclusive; the cows are the Cows of the Panis which the Angirases pursue entering the cave on their hands and knees, the finders are Indra and the Angirases who are spoken of in other hymns as Navagwas and Dashagwas, and that which is found by entering the cow-pens of the Panis in the cave of the hill is not the stolen wealth of the Aryans, but "the sun dwelling in the darkness".

Therefore it is established beyond question that the cows of the Veda, the cows of the Panis, the cows which are stolen, fought for, pursued, recovered, the cows which are desired by the Rishis, the cows which are won by the hymn and the sacrifice, by the blazing fire and the god-increasing verse and the god-intoxicating Soma, are symbolic cows, are the cows of Light, are, in the other and inner Vedic sense of the words *go*, *usrā*, *usriyā*, the shining ones, the radiances, the herds of the Sun, the luminous forms of the Dawn. By this inevitable conclusion the corner-stone of Vedic interpretation is securely founded far above the gross materialism of a barbarous worship and the Veda reveals itself as a symbolic scripture, a sacred allegory whether of Sun-worship and Dawn-worship or of the cult of a higher and inner Light, of the true Sun, *satyaṁ sūryam*, that

dwells concealed in the darkness of our ignorance, hidden as the child of the Bird, the divine Hansa, in the infinite rock of this material existence, *anante antar aśmani*.

Although in this chapter I have confined myself with some rigidity to the evidence that the cows are the light of the sun hid in darkness, yet their connection with the light of Truth and the sun of Knowledge has already shown itself in one or two of the verses cited. We shall see that when we examine, not separate verses, but whole passages of these Angiras hymns the hint thus given develops into a clear certainty. But first we must cast a glance at these Angiras Rishis and at the creatures of the cave, the friends of darkness from whom they recover the luminous herds and the lost Sun, — the enigmatic Panis.

Chapter XVI

The Angiras Rishis

THE NAME Angiras occurs in the Veda in two different forms, Angira and Angiras, although the latter is the more common; we have also the patronymic Angirasa applied more than once to the god Brihaspati. In later times Angiras, like Bhrigu and other seers, was regarded as one of the original sages, progenitors of clans of Rishis who went by their names, the Angirasas, Atris, Bhargavas. In the Veda also there are these families of Rishis, the Atris, Bhrigus, Kanwas etc. In one of the hymns of the Atris the discovery of Agni, the sacred fire, is attributed to the Angiras Rishis (V.11.6), but in another to the Bhrigus (X.46.9).[1] Frequently the seven original Angiras Rishis are described as the human fathers, *pitaro manuṣyāḥ*, who discovered the Light, made the sun to shine and ascended to the heaven of the Truth. In some of the hymns of the tenth Mandala they are associated as the Pitris or Manes with Yama, a deity who only comes into prominence in the later Suktas; they take their seats with the gods on the *barhis*, the sacred grass, and have their share in the sacrifice.

If this were all, the explanation of the part taken by the Angiras Rishis in the finding of the Cows, would be simple and superficial enough; they would be the Ancestors, the founders of the Vedic religion, partially deified by their descendants and continually associated with the gods whether in the winning back of the Dawn and the Sun out of the long Arctic night or in the conquest of the Light and the Truth. But this is not all, the Vedic myth has profounder aspects. In the first place, the Angirases are not merely the deified human fathers, they are also brought before us as heavenly seers, sons of the gods, sons

[1] Very possibly the Angiras Rishis are the flame-powers of Agni and the Bhrigus the solar powers of Surya.

of heaven and heroes or powers of the Asura, the mighty Lord, *divas putrāso asurasya vīrāḥ* (III.53.7), an expression which, their number being seven, reminds us strongly, though perhaps only fortuitously, of the seven Angels of Ahura Mazda in the kindred Iranian mythology. Moreover there are passages in which they seem to become purely symbolical, powers and sons of Agni the original Angiras, forces of the symbolic Light and Flame, and even to coalesce into a single seven-mouthed Angiras with his nine and his ten rays of the Light, *navagve aṅgire daśagve saptāsye*, on and by whom the Dawn breaks out with all her joy and opulence. And yet all these three presentations seem to be of the same Angirases, their characteristics and their action being otherwise identical.

Two entirely opposite explanations can be given of the double character of these seers, divine and human. They may have been originally human sages deified by their descendants and in the apotheosis given a divine parentage and a divine function; or they may have been originally demigods, powers of the Light and Flame, who became humanised as the fathers of the race and the discoverers of its wisdom. Both of these processes are recognisable in early mythology. In the Greek legend, for instance, Castor and Polydeuces and their sister Helen are human beings, though children of Zeus, and only deified after their death, but the probability is that originally all three were gods, — Castor and Polydeuces, the twins, riders of the horse, saviours of sailors on the ocean being almost certainly identical with the Vedic Ashwins, the Horsemen, as their name signifies, riders in the wonderful chariot, twins also, saviours of Bhujyu from the ocean, ferriers over the great waters, brothers of the Dawn, and Helen very possibly the Dawn their sister or even identical with Sarama, the hound of heaven, who is, like Dakshina, a power, almost a figure of the Dawn. But in either case there has been a farther development by which these gods or demigods have become invested with psychological functions, perhaps by the same process which in the Greek religion converted Athene, the Dawn, into the goddess of knowledge and Apollo, the sun, into the divine singer and seer, lord of the prophetic and poetic inspiration.

In the Veda it is possible that another tendency has been at work, — the persistent and all-pervading habit of symbolism dominant in the minds of these ancient Mystics. Everything, their own names, the names of Kings and sacrificers, the ordinary circumstances of their lives were turned into symbols and covers for their secret meaning. Just as they used the ambiguity of the word *go*, which means both ray and cow, so as to make the concrete figure of the cow, the chief form of their pastoral wealth, a cover for its hidden sense of the inner light which was the chief element in the spiritual wealth they coveted from the gods, so also they would use their own names, Gotama "most full of light", Gavisthira "the steadfast in light" to hide a broad and general sense for their thought beneath what seemed a personal claim or desire. Thus too they used the experiences external and internal whether of themselves or of other Rishis. If there is any truth in the old legend of Shunahshepa bound as a victim on the altar of sacrifice, it is yet quite certain, as we shall see, that in the Rig Veda the occurrence or the legend is used as a symbol of the human soul bound by the triple cord of sin and released from it by the divine power of Agni, Surya, Varuna. So also Rishis like Kutsa, Kanwa, Ushanas Kavya have become types and symbols of certain spiritual experiences and victories and placed in that capacity side by side with the gods. It is not surprising, then, that in this mystic symbolism the seven Angiras Rishis should have become divine powers and living forces of the spiritual life without losing altogether their traditional or historic human character. We will leave, however, these conjectures and speculations aside and examine instead the part played by these three elements or aspects of their personality in the figure of the cows and the recovery of the Sun and the Dawn out of the darkness.

We note first that the word Angiras is used in the Veda as an epithet, often in connection with the image of the Dawn and the Cows. Secondly, it occurs as a name of Agni, while Indra is said to become Angiras and Brihaspati is called Angiras and Angirasa, obviously not as a mere decorative or mythological appellation but with a special significance and an allusion to

the psychological or other sense attached to the word. Even the Ashwins are addressed collectively as Angiras. It is therefore clear that the word Angiras is used in the Veda not merely as a name of a certain family of Rishis, but with a distinct meaning inherent in the word. It is probable also that even when used as a name it is still with a clear recognition of the inherent meaning of the name; it is probable even that names in the Veda are generally, if not always, used with a certain stress on their significance, especially the names of gods, sages and kings. The word Indra is generally used as a name, yet we have such significant glimpses of the Vedic method as the description of Usha *indratamā aṅgirastamā*, "most-Indra", "most-Angiras", and of the Panis as *anindrāḥ*, "not-Indra", expressions which evidently are meant to convey the possession or absence of the qualities, powers or functionings represented by Indra and the Angiras. We have then to see what may be this meaning and what light it sheds on the nature or functions of the Angiras Rishis.

The word is akin to the name Agni; for it is derived from a root *aṅg* which is only a nasalised form of *ag*, the root of Agni. These roots seem to convey intrinsically the sense of preeminent or forceful state, feeling, movement, action, light,[2] and it is this last sense of a brilliant or burning light that gives us *agni*, fire, *aṅgati*, fire, *aṅgāra*, a burning coal and *aṅgiras*, which must have meant flaming, glowing. Both in the Veda and the tradition of the Brahmanas the Angirases are in their origin closely connected with Agni. In the Brahmanas it is said that Agni is the fire and the Angirases the burning coals, *aṅgārāḥ*; but in the Veda itself the indication seems rather to be that they are the flames or lustres of Agni. In X.62, a hymn to the Angiras Rishis, it is said of them that they are sons of Agni and have been born about him in different forms all about heaven, and in the next clause it is added, speaking of them collectively in the singular:

[2] For state we have *agra*, first, top and Greek *agan*, excessively; for feeling, Greek *agapē*, love, and possibly Sanskrit *aṅganā*, a woman; for movement and action several words in Sanskrit and in Greek and Latin.

navagvo nu daśagvo aṅgirastamaḥ sacā deveṣu maṁhate, nine-rayed, ten-rayed, most "Angiras", this Angiras clan becomes together full of plenty with or in the gods; aided by Indra they set free the pen of cows and horses, they give to the sacrificer the mystic eight-eared kine and thereby create in the gods *śravas*, the divine hearing or inspiration of the Truth. It is fairly evident that the Angiras Rishis are here the radiant lustres of the divine Agni which are born in heaven, therefore of the divine Flame and not of any physical fire; they become equipped with the nine rays of the Light and the ten, become most *aṅgiras*, that is to say most full of the blazing radiance of Agni, the divine flame, and are therefore able to release the imprisoned Light and Force and create the supramental knowledge.

Even if this interpretation of the symbolism is not accepted, yet that there is a symbolism must be admitted. These Angirases are not human sacrificers, but sons of Agni born in heaven, although their action is precisely that of the human Angirases, the fathers, *pitaro manuṣyāḥ*; they are born with different forms, *virūpāsaḥ*, and all this can only mean that they are various forms of the power of Agni. The question is of what Agni; the sacrificial flame, the element of fire generally or that other sacred flame which is described as "the priest with the seer-will" or "who does the work of the seer, the true, the rich in varied light of inspiration," *agnir hotā kavikratuḥ satyaś citraśravastamaḥ*? If it is the element of fire, then the blazing lustre they represent must be that of the Sun, the fire of Agni radiating out as the solar rays and in association with Indra the sky creating the Dawn. There can be no other physical interpretation consistent with the details and circumstances of the Angiras myth. But this explanation does not at all account for the farther description of the Angiras Rishis as seers, as singers of the hymn, powers of Brihaspati as well as of the Sun and Dawn.

There is another passage of the Veda (VI.6.3-5) in which the identity of these divine Angirases with the flaming lustres of Agni is clearly and unmistakably revealed. "Wide everywhere, O pure-shining Agni, range driven by the wind thy pure shining lustres (*bhāmāsaḥ*); forcefully overpowering the heavenly Nine-

rayed ones (*divyā navagvāḥ*) enjoy the woods[3] (*vanā vananti*, significantly conveying the covert sense, 'enjoying the objects of enjoyment') breaking them up violently. O thou of the pure light, they bright and pure assail[4] (or overcome) all the earth, they are thy horses galloping in all directions. Then thy roaming shines widely vast directing their journey to the higher level of the Various-coloured (the cow, Prishni, mother of the Maruts). Then doubly (in earth and heaven?) thy tongue leaps forward like the lightning loosed of the Bull that wars for the cows." Sayana tries to avoid the obvious identification of the Rishis with the flames by giving *navagva* the sense of "new-born rays", but obviously *divyā navagvāḥ* here and the sons of Agni (in X.62) born in heaven who are *navagva* are the same and cannot possibly be different; and the identification is confirmed, if any confirmation were needed, by the statement that in this ranging of Agni constituted by the action of the Navagwas his tongue takes the appearance of the thunderbolt of Indra, the Bull who wars for the cows, loosed from his hand and leaping forward, undoubtedly to assail the powers of darkness in the hill of heaven; for the march of Agni and the Navagwas is here described as ascending the hill (*sānu pṛśneḥ*) after ranging over the earth.

We have evidently here a symbolism of the Flame and the Light, the divine flames devouring the earth and then becoming the lightning of heaven and the lustre of the solar Powers; for Agni in the Veda is the light of the sun and the lightning as well as the flame found in the waters and shining on the earth. The Angiras Rishis being powers of Agni share this manifold function. The divine flame kindled by the sacrifice supplies also to Indra the material of the lightning, the weapon, the heavenly stone, *svarya aśmā*, by which he destroys the powers of darkness and wins the cows, the solar illuminations.

Agni, the father of the Angirases, is not only the fount and origin of these divine flames, he is also described in the Veda

[3] The logs of the sacrificial fire, according to Sayana.
[4] Shave the hair of the earth, according to Sayana.

as himself the first, that is to say the supreme and original Angiras, *prathamo aṅgirāḥ*. What do the Vedic poets wish us to understand by this description? We can best understand by a glance at some of the passages in which this epithet is applied to the bright and flaming deity. In the first place it is twice associated with another fixed epithet of Agni, the Son of Force or of Energy, *sahasaḥ sūnuḥ*, *ūrjo napāt*. Thus in VIII.60.2 he is addressed, "O Angiras, Son of Force," *sahasaḥ sūno aṅgiraḥ*, and in VIII.84.4, "O Agni Angiras, Son of Energy," *agne aṅgira ūrjo napāt*. And in V.11.6 it is said, "Thee, O Agni, the Angirases found established in the secret place (*guhā hitam*) lying in wood and wood (*vane vane*)" or, if we accept the indication of a covert sense we have already noted in the phrase *vanā vananti*, "in each object of enjoyment. So art thou born by being pressed (*mathyamānaḥ*), a mighty force; thee they call the Son of Force, O Angiras, *sa jāyase saho mahat tvām āhuḥ sahasas putram aṅgiraḥ*." It is hardly doubtful, then, that this idea of force is an essential element in the Vedic conception of the Angiras and it is, as we have seen, part of the meaning of the word. Force in status, action, movement, light, feeling is the inherent quality of the roots *ag* and *aṅg* from which we have *agni* and *aṅgiraḥ*. Force but also, in these words, Light. Agni, the sacred flame, is the burning force of Light; the Angirases also are burning powers of the Light.

But of what light? physical or figurative? We must not imagine that the Vedic poets were crude and savage intellects incapable of the obvious figure, common to all languages, which makes the physical light a figure of the mental and spiritual, of knowledge, of an inner illumination. The Veda speaks expressly of "luminous sages", *dyumanto viprāḥ* and the word *sūri*, a seer, is associated with Surya, the sun, by etymology and must originally have meant luminous. In I.31.1 it is said of this god of the Flame, "Thou, O Agni, wast the first Angiras, the seer and auspicious friend, a god, of the gods; in the law of thy working the Maruts with their shining spears were born, seers who do the work by the knowledge." Clearly, then, in the conception of Agni Angiras there are two ideas, knowledge and action; the

luminous Agni and the luminous Maruts are by their light seers of the knowledge, *ṛṣi*, *kavi*; and by the light of knowledge the forceful Maruts do the work because they are born or manifested in the characteristic working (*vrata*) of Agni. For Agni himself has been described to us as having the seer-will, *kavikratuḥ*, the force of action which works according to the inspired or supramental knowledge (*śravas*), for it is that knowledge and not intellectuality which is meant by the word *kavi*. What then is this great force, Agni Angiras, *saho mahat*, but the flaming force of the divine consciousness with its two twin qualities of Light and Power working in perfect harmony, — even as the Maruts are described, *kavayo vidmanā apasaḥ*, seers working by the knowledge? We have had reason to conclude that Usha is the divine Dawn and not merely the physical, that her cows or rays of the Dawn and the Sun are the illuminations of the dawning divine consciousness and that therefore the Sun is the Illuminer in the sense of the Lord of Knowledge and that Swar, the solar world beyond heaven and earth, is the world of the divine Truth and Bliss, in a word, that Light in the Veda is the symbol of knowledge, of the illumination of the divine Truth. We now begin to have reason for concluding that the Flame, which is only another aspect of Light, is the Vedic symbol for the Force of the divine consciousness, of the supramental Truth.

In another passage, VI.11.3, we have mention of the "seer most illumined of the Angirases", *vepiṣṭho aṅgirasāṁ vipraḥ*, where the reference is not at all clear. Sayana, ignoring the collocation *vepiṣṭho vipraḥ* which at once fixes the sense of *vepiṣṭha* as equivalent to most *vipra*, most a seer, most illumined, supposes that Bharadwaja, the traditional Rishi of the hymn, is here praising himself as the "greatest praiser" of the gods; but this is a doubtful suggestion. Here it is Agni who is the *hotā*, the priest; it is he who is sacrificing to the gods, to his own embodiment, *tanvaṁ tava svām*, to the Maruts, Mitra, Varuna, Heaven and Earth. "For in thee" says the hymn "the thought even though full of riches desires still the gods, the (divine) births, for the singer of the hymn that he may sacrifice to them, when the sage, the most luminous of the Angirases, utters the rhythm of sweetness

in the sacrifice." It would almost seem that Agni himself is the sage, the most luminous of the Angirases. On the other hand, the description seems to be more appropriate to Brihaspati.

For Brihaspati is also an Angirasa and one who becomes the Angiras. He is, as we have seen, closely associated with the Angiras Rishis in the winning of the luminous cattle and he is so associated as Brahmanaspati, as the Master of the sacred or inspired word (*brahma*); for by his cry Vala is split to pieces and the cows answer lowing with desire to his call. As powers of Agni these Rishis are like him *kavikratu*; they possess the divine Light, they act by it with the divine force; they are not only Rishis, but heroes of the Vedic war, *divas putrāso asurasya vīrāḥ* (III.53.7), sons of heaven, heroes of the Mighty Lord, they are, as described in VI.75.9, "the Fathers who dwell in the sweetness (the world of bliss), who establish the wide birth, moving in the difficult places, possessed of force, profound,[5] with their bright host and their strength of arrows, invincible, heroes in their being, wide overcomers of the banded foes": but also, they are, as the next verse describes them, *brāhmaṇāsaḥ pitaraḥ somyāsaḥ*, that is, they have the divine word and the inspired knowledge it carries with it.[6] This divine word is the *satya mantra*, it is the thought by whose truth the Angirases bring the Dawn to birth and make the lost Sun to rise in the heavens. This word is also called the *arka*, a vocable which means both hymn and light and is sometimes used of the sun. It is therefore the word of illumination, the word which expresses the truth of which the Sun is the lord, and its emergence from the secret seat of the Truth is associated with the outpouring by the Sun of its herded radiances; so we read in VII.36.1, "Let the Word come forward from the seat of the Truth; the Sun has released wide by its rays the cows," *pra brahmaitu sadanād ṛtasya, vi raśmibhiḥ sasṛje sūryo gāḥ*.

[5] Cf. the description in X.62.5 of the Angirases as sons of Agni, different in form, but all profound in knowledge, *gambhīravepasaḥ*.

[6] This seems to be the sense of the word Brahmana in the Veda. It certainly does not mean Brahmans by caste or priests by profession; the Fathers here are warriors as well as sages. The four castes are only mentioned in the Rig Veda once, in that profound but late composition, the Purushasukta.

It has to be won possession of like the Sun itself and the gods have to give their aid for that possession (*arkasya sātau*) as well as for the possession of the Sun (*sūryasya sātau*) and of Swar (*svarṣātau*).

The Angiras, therefore, is not only an Agni-power, he is also a Brihaspati-power. Brihaspati is called more than once the Angirasa, as in VI.73.1, *yo adribhit prathamajā ṛtāvā bṛhaspatir āṅgiraso haviṣmān*, "Brihaspati, breaker of the hill (the cave of the Panis), the first-born who has the Truth, the Angirasa, he of the oblation." And in X.47.6 we have a still more significant description of Brihaspati as the Angirasa; *pra saptagum ṛtadhītiṁ sumedhāṁ bṛhaspatiṁ matir acchā jigāti ya āṅgiraso namasā upasadyaḥ*. "The thought goes towards Brihaspati the seven-rayed, the truth-thinking, the perfect intelligence, who is the Angirasa, to be approached with obeisance." In II.23.18, also, Brihaspati is addressed as Angiras in connection with the release of the cows and the release of the waters; "For the glory of thee the hill parted asunder when thou didst release upward the pen of the cows; with Indra for ally thou didst force out, O Brihaspati, the flood of the waters which was environed by the darkness." We may note in passing how closely the release of the waters, which is the subject of the Vritra legend, is associated with the release of the cows which is the subject of the legend of the Angiras Rishis and the Panis and that both Vritra and the Panis are powers of the darkness. The cows are the light of the Truth, the true illumining sun, *satyaṁ tad . . . sūryam*; the waters released from the environing darkness of Vritra are called sometimes the streams of the Truth, *ṛtasya dhārāḥ* and sometimes *svarvatīr apaḥ*, the waters of Swar, the luminous solar world.

We see then that the Angiras is in the first place a power of Agni the seer-will; he is the seer who works by the light, by the knowledge; he is a flame of the puissance of Agni, the great force that is born into the world to be the priest of the sacrifice and the leader of the journey, the puissance which the gods are said by Vamadeva (IV.1) to establish here as the Immortal in mortals, the energy that does the great work (*arati*). In the second place, he is a power or at least has the power of Brihaspati, the

truth-thinking and seven-rayed, whose seven rays of the light hold that truth which he thinks (*ṛtadhītim*) and whose seven mouths repeat the word that expresses the truth, the god of whom it is said (IV.50.4-5), "Brihaspati coming first to birth out of the great Light in the highest heaven, born in many forms, seven-mouthed, seven-rayed (*saptāsyaḥ saptaraśmiḥ*), by his cry dispelled the darkness; he by his host with the Rik and the Stubh (the hymn of illumination and the rhythm that affirms the gods) broke Vala by his cry." It cannot be doubted that by this host or troop of Brihaspati (*suṣṭubhā ṛkvatā gaṇena*) are meant the Angiras Rishis who by the true mantra help in the great victory.

Indra is also described as becoming an Angiras or as becoming possessed of the Angiras quality. "May he become most Angiras with the Angirases, being the Bull with bulls (the bull is the male power or Purusha, *nṛ*, with regard to the Rays and the Waters who are the cows, *gāvaḥ*, *dhenavaḥ*), the Friend with friends, the possessor of the Rik with those who have the Rik (*ṛgmibhir ṛgmī*), with those who make the journey (*gātubhiḥ*, the souls that advance on the path towards the Vast and True) the greatest; may Indra become associated with the Maruts (*marutvān*) for our thriving." The epithets here (I.100.4) are all the proper epithets of the Angiras Rishis and Indra is supposed to take upon himself the qualities or relations that constitute Angirashood. So in III.31.7, "Most illumined in knowledge (*vipratamaḥ*, answering to the *vepiṣṭho aṅgirasāṁ vipraḥ* of VI.11.3), becoming a friend (*sakhīyan*, the Angirases are friends or comrades in the great battle) he went (*agacchad*, upon the path, cf. *gātubhiḥ*, discovered by Sarama); the hill sped forth its pregnant contents (*garbham*) for the doer of the good work; strong in manhood with the young (*maryo yuvabhiḥ*, the youth also giving the idea of unaging, undecaying force) he sought fullness of riches and won possession (*sasāna makhasyan*); so at once, chanting the hymn (*arcan*), he became an Angiras." This Indra who assumes all the qualities of the Angiras is, we must remember, the Lord of Swar, the wide world of the Sun or the Truth, and descends to us with his two shining horses, *harī*, which are called in one passage *sūryasya ketū*, the sun's

two powers of perception or of vision in knowledge, in order to war with the sons of darkness and aid the great journey. If we have been right in all that we have concluded with regard to the esoteric sense of the Veda, Indra must be the Power (*indra*, the Puissant,[7] the powerful lord) of the divine Mind born in man and there increasing by the Word and the Soma to his full divinity. This growth continues by the winning and growth of the Light, till Indra reveals himself fully as the lord of all the luminous herds which he sees by the "eye of the sun", the divine Mind master of all the illuminations of knowledge.

Indra in becoming the Angiras, becomes Marutwan, possessed of or companioned by the Maruts, and these Maruts, luminous and violent gods of the storm and the lightning, uniting in themselves the vehement power of Vayu, the Wind, the Breath, the Lord of Life and the force of Agni, the Seer-Will, are therefore seers who do the work by the knowledge, *kavayo vidmanā apasaḥ*, as well as battling forces who by the power of the heavenly Breath and the heavenly lightning overthrow the established things, the artificial obstructions, *kṛtrimāṇi rodhāṁsi*, in which the sons of Darkness have entrenched themselves, and aid Indra to overcome Vritra and the Dasyus. They seem to be in the esoteric Veda the Life-Powers that support by their nervous or vital energies the action of the thought in the attempt of the mortal consciousness to grow or expand itself into the immortality of the Truth and Bliss. In any case, they also are described in VI.49.11 as acting with the qualities of the Angiras (*aṅgirasvat*), "O young and seers and powers of the sacrifice, Maruts, come uttering the word to the high place (or desirable plane of earth or the hill, *adhi sānu pṛśneḥ*, which is probably the sense of *varasyām*), powers increasing, rightly moving (on the path, *gātu*) like the Angiras,[8] give joy even to that which is not

[7] But also perhaps "shining", cf. *indu*, the moon; *ina*, glorious, the sun; *indh*, to kindle.

[8] It is to be noted that Sayana here hazards the idea that Angiras means the moving rays (from *aṅg* to move) *or* the Angiras Rishis. If the great scholar had been able to pursue with greater courage his ideas to their logical conclusion, he would have anticipated the modern theory in its most essential points.

illumined (*acitram*, that which has not received the varied light of the dawn, the night of our ordinary darkness)." We see here the same characteristics of the Angiras action, the eternal youth and force of Agni (*agne yaviṣṭha*), the possession and utterance of the Word, the seerhood, the doing of the work of sacrifice, the right movement on the great path which leads as we shall see to the world of the Truth, to the vast and luminous bliss. The Maruts are even said to be (X.78) as it were "Angirases with their Sama hymns, they who take all forms," *viśvarūpā aṅgiraso na sāmabhiḥ*.

All this action and movement are made possible by the coming of Usha, the Dawn. Usha also is described as *aṅgirastamā* and in addition as *indratamā*. The power of Agni, the Angiras power, manifests itself also in the lightning of Indra and in the rays of the Dawn. Two passages may be cited which throw light on this aspect of the Angiras force. The first is VII.79.2-3. "The Dawns make their rays to shine out in the extremities of heaven, they labour like men who are set to a work. Thy rays set fleeing the darkness, they extend the Light as if the sun were extending its two arms. Usha has become (or, come into being) most full of Indra power (*indratamā*), opulent in riches and has given birth to the inspirations of knowledge for our happy going (or for good and bliss), the goddess, daughter of Heaven, most full of Angirashood (*aṅgirastamā*), orders her riches for the doer of good works." The riches in which Usha is opulent cannot be anything else than the riches of the Light and the Power of the Truth; full of Indra power, the power of the divine illumined mind, she gives the inspirations of that mind (*śravāṁsi*) which lead us towards the Bliss, and by the flaming radiant Angiras-power in her she bestows and arranges her treasures for those who do aright the great work and thus move rightly on the path, *itthā nakṣanto aṅgirasvat*.

The second passage is in VII.75. "Dawn, heaven-born, has opened up (the veil of darkness) by the Truth and she comes making manifest the vastness (*mahimānam*), she has drawn away the veil of harms and of darkness (*druhas tamaḥ*) and all that is unloved; most full of Angirashood she manifests the paths (of

the great journey). Today, O Dawn, awake for us for the journey to the vast bliss (*mahe suvitāya*), extend (thy riches) for a vast state of enjoyment, confirm in us a wealth of varied brightness (*citram*) full of inspired knowledge (*śravasyum*), in us mortals, O human and divine. These are the lustres of the visible Dawn which have come varied-bright (*citrāḥ*) and immortal; bringing to birth the divine workings they diffuse themselves, filling those of the mid-region," *janayanto daivyāni vratāni, āpṛṇanto antarikṣā vyasthuḥ*. Again we have the Angiras power associated with the journey, the revelation of its paths by the removal of the darkness and the bringing of the radiances of the Dawn; the Panis represent the harms (*druhaḥ*, hurts or those who hurt) done to man by the evil powers, the darkness is their cave; the journey is that which leads to the divine happiness and the state of immortal bliss by means of our growing wealth of light and power and knowledge; the immortal lustres of the Dawn which give birth in man to the heavenly workings and fill with them the workings of the mid-regions between earth and heaven, that is to say, the functioning of those vital planes governed by Vayu which link our physical and pure mental being, may well be the Angiras powers. For they too gain and maintain the truth by maintaining unhurt the divine workings (*amardhanto devānāṁ vratāni*). This is indeed their function, to bring the divine Dawn into mortal nature so that the visible goddess pouring out her riches may be there, at once divine and human, *devi marteṣu mānuṣi*, the goddess human in mortals.

Chapter XVII

The Seven-Headed Thought, Swar and the Dashagwas

THE LANGUAGE of the hymns establishes, then, a double aspect for the Angiras Rishis. One belongs to the external garb of the Veda; it weaves together its naturalistic imagery of the Sun, the Flame, the Dawn, the Cow, the Horse, the Wine, the sacrificial Hymn; the other extricates from that imagery the internal sense. The Angirases are sons of the Flame, lustres of the Dawn, givers and drinkers of the Wine, singers of the Hymn, eternal youths and heroes who wrest for us the Sun, the Cows, the Horses and all treasures from the grasp of the sons of darkness. But they are also seers of the Truth, finders and speakers of the word of the Truth and by the power of the Truth they win for us the wide world of Light and Immortality which is described in the Veda as the Vast, the True, the Right and as the own home of this Flame of which they are the children. This physical imagery and these psychological indications are closely interwoven and they cannot be separated from each other. Therefore we are obliged by ordinary common sense to conclude that the Flame of which the Right and the Truth is the own home is itself a Flame of that Right and Truth, that the Light which is won by the Truth and by the force of true thought is not merely a physical light, the cows which Sarama finds on the path of the Truth not merely physical herds, the Horses not merely the wealth of the Dravidians conquered by invading Aryan tribes, nor even merely images of the physical Dawn, its light and its swiftly moving rays and the darkness of which the Panis and Vritra are the defenders not merely the darkness of the Indian or the Arctic night. We have even been able to hazard a reasonable hypothesis by which we can disentangle the real sense of this imagery and discover the

true godhead of these shining gods and these divine, luminous sages.

The Angiras Rishis are at once divine and human seers. This double character is not in itself an extraordinary feature or peculiar in the Veda to these sages. The Vedic gods also have a double action; divine and pre-existent in themselves, they are human in their working upon the mortal plane when they grow in man to the great ascension. This has been strikingly expressed in the allocution to Usha, the Dawn, "goddess human in mortals", *devi marteṣu mānuṣi*. But in the imagery of the Angiras Rishis this double character is farther complicated by the tradition which makes them the human fathers, discoverers of the Light, the Path and the Goal. We must see how this complication affects our theory of the Vedic creed and the Vedic symbolism.

The Angiras Rishis are ordinarily described as seven in number: they are *sapta viprāḥ*, the seven sages who have come down to us in the Puranic tradition[1] and are enthroned by Indian astronomy in the constellation of the Great Bear. But they are also described as Navagwas and Dashagwas, and if in VI.22 we are told of the ancient fathers, the seven seers who were Navagwas, *pūrve pitaro navagvāḥ sapta viprāso*, yet in III.39.5 we have mention of two different classes, Navagwas, and Dashagwas, the latter ten in number, the former presumably, though it is not expressly stated, nine. *Sakhā ha yatra sakhibhir navagvair, abhijñvā satvabhir gā anugman; satyaṁ tad indro daśabhir daśagvaiḥ, sūryaṁ viveda tamasi kṣiyantam;* "where, a friend with his friends the Navagwas, following the cows Indra with the ten Dashagwas found that truth, even the Sun dwelling in the darkness." On the other hand we have in IV.51 a collective description of the Angiras seven-faced or seven-mouthed, nine-rayed, ten-rayed, *navagve aṅgire daśagve saptāsye*. In X.108.8 we have another Rishi Ayasya associated with the Navagwa Angirases. In X.67 this Ayasya is described as our father who found the vast seven-headed Thought that was born out of

[1] Not that the names given them by the Purana need be those which the Vedic tradition would have given.

the Truth and as singing the hymn to Indra. According as the Navagwas are seven or nine, Ayasya will be the eighth or the tenth Rishi.

Tradition asserts the separate existence of two classes of Angiras Rishis, the one Navagwas who sacrificed for nine months, the other Dashagwas whose sessions of sacrifice endured for ten. According to this interpretation we must take Navagwa and Dashagwa as "nine-cowed" and "ten-cowed", each cow representing collectively the thirty Dawns which constitute one month of the sacrificial year. But there is at least one passage of the Rig Veda which on its surface is in direct conflict with the traditional interpretation. For in the seventh verse of V.45 and again in the eleventh we are told that it was the Navagwas, not the Dashagwas, who sacrificed or chanted the hymn for ten months. This seventh verse runs, *Anūnod atra hastayato adrir, ārcan yena daśa māso navagvāḥ; ṛtaṁ yatī saramā gā avindad, viśvāni satyā aṅgirāś cakāra,* "Here cried (or, moved) the stone impelled by the hand, whereby the Navagwas chanted for ten months the hymn; Sarama travelling to the Truth found the cows; all things the Angiras made true." And in verse 11 we have the assertion repeated; *Dhiyaṁ vo apsu dadhiṣe svarṣāṁ, yayātaran daśa māso navagvāḥ; ayā dhiyā syāma devagopā, ayā dhiyā tuturyāma ati aṁhaḥ.* "I hold for you in the waters (i.e. the seven Rivers) the thought that wins possession of heaven[2] (this is once more the seven-headed thought born from the Truth and found by Ayasya), by which the Navagwas passed through the ten months; by this thought may we have the gods for protectors, by this thought may we pass through beyond the evil." The statement is explicit. Sayana indeed makes a faint-hearted attempt to take *daśa māso* in v. 7, ten months, as if it were an epithet *daśamāso*, the ten-month ones i.e. the Dashagwas; but he offers this improbable rendering only as an alternative and abandons it in the eleventh rik.

[2] Sayana takes it to mean, "I recite the hymn for water" i.e. in order to get rain; the case however is the locative plural, and *dadhiṣe* means "I place or hold" or, with the psychological sense, "think" or "hold in thought, meditate". *Dhiṣaṇā* like *dhī* means thought; *dhiyaṁ dadhiṣe* would thus mean "I think or meditate the thought."

Must we then suppose that the poet of this hymn had forgotten the tradition and was confusing the Dashagwas and Navagwas? Such a supposition is inadmissible. The difficulty arises because we suppose the Navagwas and Dashagwas to have been in the minds of the Vedic Rishis two different classes of Angiras Rishis; rather these seem to have been two different powers of Angirashood and in that case the Navagwas themselves might well become Dashagwas by extending the period of the sacrifice to ten months instead of nine. The expression in the hymn, *daśa māso ataran*, indicates that there was some difficulty in getting through the full period of ten months. It is during this period apparently that the sons of darkness had the power to assail the sacrifice; for it is indicated that it is only by the confirming of the thought which conquers Swar, the solar world, that the Rishis are able to get through the ten months, but this thought once found they become assured of the protection of the gods and pass beyond the assault of the evil, the harms of the Panis and Vritras. This Swar-conquering thought is certainly the same as that seven-headed thought which was born from the Truth and discovered by Ayasya the companion of the Navagwas; for by it, we are told, Ayasya becoming universal, embracing the births in all the worlds, brought into being a fourth world or fourfold world, which must be the supramental beyond the three lower sessions, Dyaus, Antariksha and Prithivi, that wide world which, according to Kanwa son of Ghora, men reach or create by crossing beyond the two Rodasi after killing Vritra. This fourth world must be therefore Swar. The seven-headed thought of Ayasya enables him to become *viśvajanya*, which means probably that he occupies or possesses all the worlds or births of the soul or else that he becomes universal, identifying himself with all beings born, — and to manifest or give being to a certain fourth world (Swar), *turīyaṁ svij janayad viśvajanyaḥ* (X.67.1); and the thought established in the waters which enables the Navagwa Rishis to pass through the ten months, is also *svarṣā*, that which brings about the possession of Swar. The waters are clearly the seven rivers and the two thoughts are evidently the same. Must we not then conclude that it is the addition

of Ayasya to the Navagwas which raises the nine Navagwas to the number of ten and enables them by his discovery of the seven-headed Swar-conquering thought to prolong their nine-months' sacrifice through the tenth month? Thus they become the ten Dashagwas. We may note in this connection that the intoxication of the Soma by which Indra manifests or increases the might of Swar or the Swar-Purusha (*Svarṇara*) is described as ten-rayed and illuminating (*daśagvaṁ vepayantam*).

This conclusion is entirely confirmed by the passage in III.39.5 which we have already cited. For there we find that it is with the help of the Navagwas that Indra pursues the trace of the lost kine, but it is only with the aid of the ten Dashagwas that he is able to bring the pursuit to a successful issue and find that Truth, *satyaṁ tat*, namely, the Sun that was lying in the darkness. In other words, it is when the nine-months' sacrifice is prolonged through the tenth, it is when the Navagwas become the ten Dashagwas by the seven-headed thought of Ayasya, the tenth Rishi, that the Sun is found and the luminous world of Swar in which we possess the truth of the one universal Deva, is disclosed and conquered. This conquest of Swar is the aim of the sacrifice and the great work accomplished by the Angiras Rishis.

But what is meant by the figure of the months? for it now becomes clear that it is a figure, a parable; the year is symbolic, the months are symbolic.[3] It is in the revolution of the year that the recovery of the lost Sun and the lost cows is effected, for we have the explicit statement in X.62.2, *ṛtenābhindan parivatsare valam*, "by the truth, in the revolution of the year, they broke Vala," or, as Sayana interprets it, "by sacrifice lasting for a year." This passage certainly goes far to support the Arctic theory, for it speaks of a yearly and not a daily return of the Sun. But we are not concerned with the external figure, nor does its validity in any way affect our own theory; for it may very well be that the striking Arctic experience of the long night, the annual

[3] Observe that in the Puranas the Yugas, moments, months, etc. are all symbolic and it is stated that the body of man is the year.

sunrise and the continuous dawns was made by the Mystics the figure of the spiritual night and its difficult illumination. But that this idea of Time, of the months and years is used as a symbol seems to be clear from other passages of the Veda, notably from Gritsamada's hymn to Brihaspati, II.24.

In this hymn Brihaspati is described driving up the cows, breaking Vala by the divine word, *brahmaṇā*, concealing the darkness and making Swar visible. The first result is the breaking open by force of the well which has the rock for its face and whose streams are of the honey, *madhu*, the Soma sweetness, *aśmāsyam avataṁ madhudhāram*. This well of honey covered by the rock must be the Ananda or divine beatitude of the supreme threefold world of bliss, the Satya, Tapas and Jana worlds of the Puranic system based upon the three supreme principles, Sat, Chit-Tapas and Ananda; their base is Swar of the Veda, Mahar of the Upanishads and Puranas, the world of Truth.[4] These four together make the fourfold fourth world and are described in the Rig Veda as the four supreme and secret seats, the source of the "four upper rivers". Sometimes, however, this upper world seems to be divided into two, Swar the base, Mayas or the divine beatitude the summit, so that there are five worlds or births of the ascending soul. The three other rivers are the three lower powers of being and supply the principles of the three lower worlds.

This secret well of honey is drunk by all those who are able to see Swar and they pour out its billowing fountain of sweetness in manifold streams together, *tam eva viśve papire svardṛśo bahu sākaṁ sisicur utsam udriṇam*. These many streams poured out together are the seven rivers poured down the hill by Indra after slaying Vritra, the rivers or streams of the Truth, *ṛtasya dhārāḥ*; and they represent, according to our theory, the seven principles of conscious being in their divine fulfilment in the Truth and

[4] In the Upanishads and Puranas there is no distinction between Swar and Dyaus; therefore a fourth name had to be found for the world of Truth, and this is the Mahar discovered according to the Taittiriya Upanishad by the Rishi Mahachamasya as the fourth Vyahriti, the other three being Swar, Bhuvar and Bhur, i.e. Dyaus, Antariksha and Prithivi of the Veda.

Bliss. This is why the seven-headed thought, — that is to say, the knowledge of the divine existence with its seven heads or powers, the seven-rayed knowledge of Brihaspati, *saptagum*, has to be confirmed or held in thought in the waters, the seven rivers, that is to say the seven forms of divine consciousness are to be held in the seven forms or movements of divine being; *dhiyaṁ vo apsu dadhiṣe svarṣām*, I hold the Swar-conquering thought in the waters.

That the making visible of Swar to the eyes of the Swar-seers, *svardṛśaḥ*, their drinking of the honeyed well and their outpouring of the divine waters amounts to the revelation to man of new worlds or new states of existence is clearly told us in the next verse, II.24.5, *sanā tā kā cid bhuvanā bhavītvā, mādbhiḥ śaradbhir duro varanta vaḥ; ayatantā carato anyad anyad id, yā cakāra vayunā brahmaṇaspatiḥ,* "Certain eternal worlds (states of existence) are these which have to come into being, their doors are shut[5] to you (or, opened) by the months and the years; without effort one (world) moves in the other, and it is these that Brahmanaspati has made manifest to knowledge"; *vayunā* means knowledge, and the two forms are divinised earth and heaven which Brahmanaspati created. These are the four eternal worlds hidden in the *guhā*, the secret, unmanifest or superconscient parts of being which although in themselves eternally present states of existence (*sanā bhuvanā*) are for us non-existent and in the future; for us they have to be brought into being, *bhavītvā*, they are yet to be created. Therefore the Veda sometimes speaks of Swar being made visible, as here (*vyacakṣayat svaḥ*), or discovered and taken possession of, *vidat*, *sanat*, sometimes of its being created or made (*bhū*, *kṛ*). These secret eternal worlds have been closed to us, says the Rishi, by the movement of Time, by the months and years; therefore naturally they have to be discovered, revealed, conquered,

[5] Sayana says *varanta* is here "opened", which is quite possible, but *vṛ* means ordinarily to shut, close up, cover, especially when applied to the doors of the hill whence flow the rivers and the cows come forth; Vritra is the closer of the doors. *Vi vṛ* and *apa vṛ* mean to open. Nevertheless, if the word means here to open, that only makes our case all the stronger.

created in us by the movement of Time, yet in a sense against it. This development in an inner or psychological Time is, it seems to me, that which is symbolised by the sacrificial year and by the ten months that have to be spent before the revealing hymn of the soul (*brahma*) is able to discover the seven-headed, heaven-conquering thought which finally carries us beyond the harms of Vritra and the Panis.

We get the connection of the rivers and the worlds very clearly in I.62 where Indra is described as breaking the hill by the aid of the Navagwas and breaking Vala by the aid of the Dashagwas. Hymned by the Angiras Rishis Indra opens up the darkness by the Dawn and the Sun and the Cows, he spreads out the high plateau of the earthly hill into wideness and upholds the higher world of heaven. For the result of the opening up of the higher planes of consciousness is to increase the wideness of the physical, to raise the height of the mental. "This, indeed," says the Rishi Nodha, "is his mightiest work, the fairest achievement of the achiever," *dasmasya cārutamam asti daṁsaḥ*, "that the four upper rivers streaming honey nourish the two worlds of the crookedness," *upahvare yad uparā apinvan madhvarṇaso nadyaś catasraḥ*. This is again the honey-streaming well pouring down its many streams together; the four higher rivers of the divine being, divine conscious force, divine delight, divine truth nourishing the two worlds of the mind and body into which they descend with their floods of sweetness. These two, the Rodasi, are normally worlds of crookedness, that is to say of the falsehood, — the *ṛtam* or Truth being the straight, the *anṛtam* or Falsehood the crooked, — because they are exposed to the harms of the undivine powers, Vritras and Panis, sons of darkness and division. They now become forms of the truth, the knowledge, *vayunā*, agreeing with outer action and this is evidently Gritsamada's *carato anyad anyad* and his *yā cakāra vayunā brahmaṇaspatiḥ*. The Rishi then proceeds to define the result of the work of Ayasya, which is to reveal the true eternal and unified form of earth and heaven. "In their twofold (divine and human?) Ayasya uncovered by his hymns the two, eternal and in one nest; perfectly achieving he upheld earth and

heaven[6] in the highest ether (of the revealed superconscient, *paramaṁ guhyam*) as the Enjoyer his two wives." The soul's enjoyment of its divinised mental and bodily existence upheld in the eternal joy of the spiritual being could not be more clearly and beautifully imaged.

These ideas and many of the expressions are the same as those of the hymn of Gritsamada. Nodha says of the Night and Dawn, the dark physical and the illumined mental consciousness that they new-born (*punarbhuvā*) about heaven and earth move into each other with their own proper movements, *svebhir evaiḥ . . . carato anyānyā* (cf. Gritsamada's *ayatantā carato anyad anyad*, *ayatantā* bearing the same sense as *svebhir evaiḥ*, i.e. spontaneously), in the eternal friendship that is worked out by the high achievement of their son who thus upholds them, *sanemi sakhyaṁ svapasyamānaḥ, sūnur dādhāra śavasā sudaṁsāḥ*. In Gritsamada's hymn as in Nodha's the Angirases attain to Swar, — the Truth from which they originally came, the "own home" of all divine Purushas, — by the attainment of the truth and by the detection of the falsehood. "They who travel towards the goal and attain that treasure of the Panis, the supreme treasure hidden in the secret cave, they, having the knowledge and perceiving the falsehoods, rise up again thither whence they came and enter into that world. Possessed of the truth, beholding the falsehoods they, seers, rise up again into the great path," *mahas pathaḥ*, the path of the Truth, or the great and wide realm, Mahas of the Upanishads.

We begin now to unravel the knot of this Vedic imagery. Brihaspati is the seven-rayed Thinker, *saptaguḥ*, *saptaraśmiḥ*, he is the seven-faced or seven-mouthed Angiras, born in many forms, *saptāsyas tuvijātaḥ*, nine-rayed, ten-rayed. The seven mouths are the seven Angirases who repeat the divine word (*brahma*) which comes from the seat of the Truth, Swar, and of which he is the lord (*brahmaṇaspatiḥ*). Each also corresponds to

[6] This and many other passages show clearly, conclusively, as it seems to me, that the *anyad anyad*, the two are always earth and heaven, the human based on the physical consciousness and the divine based on the supraphysical, heaven.

one of the seven rays of Brihaspati; therefore they are the seven seers, *sapta viprāḥ*, *sapta ṛṣayaḥ*, who severally personify these seven rays of the knowledge. These rays are, again, the seven brilliant horses of the sun, *sapta haritaḥ*, and their full union constitutes the seven-headed Thought of Ayasya by which the lost sun of Truth is recovered. That thought again is established in the seven rivers, the seven principles of being divine and human, the totality of which founds the perfect spiritual existence. The winning of these seven rivers of our being withheld by Vritra and these seven rays withheld by Vala, the possession of our complete divine consciousness delivered from all falsehood by the free descent of the truth, gives us the secure possession of the world of Swar and the enjoyment of mental and physical being lifted into the godhead above darkness, falsehood and death by the in-streaming of our divine elements. This victory is won in twelve periods of the upward journey, represented by the revolution of the twelve months of the sacrificial year, the periods corresponding to the successive dawns of a wider and wider truth, until the tenth secures the victory. What may be the precise significance of the nine rays and the ten, is a more difficult question which we are not yet in a position to solve; but the light we already have is sufficient to illuminate all the main imagery of the Rig Veda.

The symbolism of the Veda depends upon the image of the life of man as a sacrifice, a journey and a battle. The ancient Mystics took for their theme the spiritual life of man, but, in order both to make it concrete to themselves and to veil its secrets from the unfit, they expressed it in poetical images drawn from the outward life of their age. That life was largely an existence of herdsmen and tillers of the soil for the mass of the people varied by the wars and migrations of the clans under their kings, and in all this activity the worship of the gods by sacrifice had become the most solemn and magnificent element, the knot of all the rest. For by the sacrifice were won the rain which fertilised the soil, the herds of cattle and horses necessary for their existence in peace and war, the wealth of gold, land (*kṣetra*), retainers, fighting-men which constituted greatness and lordship, the victory in the

battle, safety in the journey by land and water which was so difficult and dangerous in those times of poor means of communication and loosely organised inter-tribal existence. All the principal features of that outward life which they saw around them the mystic poets took and turned into significant images of the inner life. The life of man is represented as a sacrifice to the gods, a journey sometimes figured as a crossing of dangerous waters, sometimes as an ascent from level to level of the hill of being, and, thirdly, as a battle against hostile nations. But these three images are not kept separate. The sacrifice is also a journey; indeed the sacrifice itself is described as travelling, as journeying to a divine goal; and the journey and the sacrifice are both continually spoken of as a battle against the dark powers.

The legend of the Angirases takes up and combines all these three essential features of the Vedic imagery. The Angirases are pilgrims of the light. The phrase *nakṣantaḥ* or *abhinakṣantaḥ* is constantly used to describe their characteristic action. They are those who travel towards the goal and attain to the highest, *abhinakṣanto abhi ye tam ānaśur nidhiṁ paramam*, "they who travel to and attain that supreme treasure" (II.24.6). Their action is invoked for carrying forward the life of man farther towards its goal, *sahasrasāve pra tiranta āyuḥ* (III.53.7). But this journey, if principally of the nature of a quest, the quest of the hidden light, becomes also by the opposition of the powers of darkness an expedition and a battle. The Angirases are heroes and fighters of that battle, *goṣu yodhāḥ*, "fighters for the cows or rays". Indra marches with them *saraṇyubhiḥ*, as travellers on the path, *sakhibhiḥ*, comrades, *ṛkvabhiḥ* and *kavibhiḥ*, seers and singers of the sacred chant, but also *satvabhiḥ*, fighters in the battle. They are frequently spoken of by the appellation *nṛ* or *vīra*, as when Indra is said to win the luminous herds *asmākebhiḥ nṛbhiḥ*, "by our men". Strengthened by them he conquers in the journey and reaches the goal, *nakṣad-dābhaṁ taturim*. This journey or march proceeds along the path discovered by Sarama, the hound of heaven, the path of the Truth, *ṛtasya panthāḥ*, the great path, *mahas pathaḥ*, which leads to the realms of the Truth. It is also the sacrificial journey; for its stages correspond to the

periods of the sacrifice of the Navagwas and it is effected by the force of the Soma-wine and the sacred Word.

The drinking of the Soma-wine as the means of strength, victory and attainment is one of the pervading figures of the Veda. Indra and the Ashwins are the great Soma-drinkers, but all the gods have their share of the immortalising draught. The Angirases also conquer in the strength of the Soma. Sarama threatens the Panis with the coming of Ayasya and the Navagwa Angirases in the keen intensity of their Soma rapture, *eha gamann ṛṣayaḥ somaśitā ayāsyo aṅgiraso navagvāḥ* (X.108.8). It is the great force by which men have the power to follow the path of the Truth. "That rapture of the Soma we desire by which thou, O Indra, didst make to thrive the Might of Swar (or the Swar-soul, *svarṇaram*), that rapture ten-rayed and making a light of knowledge (or, shaking the whole being with its force, *daśagvaṁ vepayantam*) by which thou didst foster the ocean; that Soma-intoxication by which thou didst drive forward the great waters (the seven rivers) like chariots to their sea, — that we desire that we may travel on the path of the truth," *panthām ṛtasya yātave tam īmahe* (VIII.12.2-3). It is in the power of the Soma that the hill is broken open, the sons of darkness overthrown. This Soma-wine is the sweetness that comes flowing from the streams of the upper hidden world, it is that which flows in the seven waters, it is that with which the *ghṛta*, the clarified butter of the mystic sacrifice, is instinct; it is the honeyed wave which rises out of the ocean of life. Such images can have only one meaning; it is the divine delight hidden in all existence which, once manifest, supports all life's crowning activities and is the force that finally immortalises the mortal, the *amṛtam*, ambrosia of the gods.

But it is especially the Word that the Angirases possess; their seerhood is their most distinguishing characteristic. They are *brāhmaṇāsaḥ pitaraḥ somyāsaḥ . . . ṛtāvṛdhaḥ* (VI.75.10), the fathers who are full of the Soma and have the word and are therefore increasers of the Truth. Indra in order to impel them on the path joins himself to the chanted expressions of their thought and gives fullness and force to the words of their soul, *aṅgirasām ucathā jujuṣvān brahmā tūtod gātum iṣṇan* (II.20.5).

It is when enriched in light and force of thought by the Angirases that Indra completes his victorious journey and reaches the goal on the mountain; "In him our primal fathers, the seven seers, the Navagwas, increase their plenty, him victorious on his march and breaking through (to the goal), standing on the mountain, inviolate in speech, most luminous-forceful by his thinkings," *nakṣad-dābhaṁ taturiṁ parvateṣṭhām, adroghavācaṁ matibhiḥ śaviṣṭham* (VI.22.2). It is by singing the Rik, the hymn of illumination, that they find the solar illuminations in the cave of our being, *arcanto*[7] *gā avindan* (I.62.2). It is by the *stubh*, the all-supporting rhythm of the hymn of the seven seers, by the vibrating voice of the Navagwas that Indra becomes full of the power of Swar, *svareṇa svaryaḥ* and by the cry of the Dashagwas that he rends Vala in pieces (I.62.4). For this cry is the voice of the higher heaven, the thunder that cries in the lightning-flash of Indra, and the advance of the Angirases on their path is the forward movement of this cry of the heavens, *pra brahmāṇo aṅgiraso nakṣanta, pra krandanur nabhanyasya vetu* (VII.42.1); for we are told that the voice of Brihaspati the Angirasa discovering the Sun and the Dawn and the Cow and the light of the Word is the thunder of Heaven, *bṛhaspatir uṣasaṁ sūryaṁ gām, arkaṁ viveda stanayann iva dyauḥ* (X.67.5). It is by the *satya mantra*, the true thought expressed in the rhythm of the truth, that the hidden light is found and the Dawn brought to birth, *gūḍhaṁ jyotiḥ pitaro anvavindan, satyamantrā ajanayann uṣāsam* (VII.76.4). For these are the Angirases who speak aright, *itthā vadadbhiḥ aṅgirobhiḥ* (VI.18.5), masters of the Rik who place perfectly their thought, *svādhībhir ṛkvabhiḥ* (VI.32.2); they are the sons of heaven, heroes of the Mighty Lord who speak the truth and think the straightness and therefore they are able to hold the seat of illumined knowledge, to mentalise the supreme abode of the sacrifice, *ṛtaṁ śaṁsanta ṛju dīdhyānā, divas putrāso asurasya vīrāḥ; vipraṁ padam aṅgiraso dadhānā, yajñasya dhāma prathamaṁ mananta* (X.67.2).

[7] *Arcati* (*ṛc*) in the Veda means to shine and to sing the Rik; *arka* means sun, light and the Vedic hymn.

It is impossible that such expressions should convey nothing more than the recovery of stolen cows from Dravidian cave-dwellers by some Aryan seers led by a god and his dog or else the return of the Dawn after the darkness of the night. The wonders of the Arctic dawn themselves are insufficient to explain the association of images and the persistent stress on the idea of the Word, the Thought, the Truth, the journey and the conquest of the falsehood which meets us always in these hymns. Only the theory we are enouncing, a theory not brought in from outside but arising straight from the language and the suggestions of the hymns themselves, can unite this varied imagery and bring an easy lucidity and coherence into this apparent tangle of incongruities. In fact, once the central idea is grasped and the mentality of the Vedic Rishis and the principle of their symbolism are understood, no incongruity and no disorder remain. There is a fixed system of symbols which, except in some of the later hymns, does not admit of any important variations and in the light of which the inner sense of the Veda everywhere yields itself up readily enough. There is indeed a certain restricted freedom in the combination of the symbols, as in those of any fixed poetical imagery, — for instance, the sacred poems of the Vaishnavas; but the substance of thought behind is constant, coherent and does not vary.

Chapter XVIII

The Human Fathers

THESE characteristics of the Angiras Rishis seem at first sight to indicate that they are in the Vedic system a class of demigods, in their outward aspect personifications or rather personalities of the Light and the Voice and the Flame, but in their inner aspect powers of the Truth who second the gods in their battles. But even as divine seers, even as sons of Heaven and heroes of the Lord, these sages represent aspiring humanity. True, they are originally the sons of the gods, *devaputrāḥ*, children of Agni, forms of the manifoldly born Brihaspati, and in their ascent to the world of the Truth they are described as ascending back to the place from whence they came; but even in these characteristics they may well be representative of the human soul which has itself descended from that world and has to reascend; for it is in its origin a mental being, son of immortality (*amṛtasya putraḥ*), a child of Heaven born in Heaven and mortal only in the bodies that it assumes. And the part of the Angiras Rishis in the sacrifice is the human part, to find the word, to sing the hymn of the soul to the gods, to sustain and increase the divine Powers by the praise, the sacred food and the Soma-wine, to bring to birth by their aid the divine Dawn, to win the luminous forms of the all-radiating Truth and to ascend to its secret, far and high-seated home.

In this work of the sacrifice they appear in a double form,[1] the divine Angirases, *ṛṣayo divyāḥ*, who symbolise and preside over certain psychological powers and workings like the gods, and the human fathers, *pitaro manuṣyāḥ*, who like the Ribhus, also described as human beings or at least human powers that

[1] It is to be noted that the Puranas distinguish specifically between two classes of Pitris, the divine Fathers, a class of deities, and the human Ancestors, to both of whom the *piṇḍa* is offered. The Puranas, obviously, only continue in this respect the original Vedic tradition.

have conquered immortality by the work, have attained the goal and are invoked to assist a later mortal race in the same divine achievement. Quite apart from the later Yama hymns of the tenth Mandala in which the Angirases are spoken of as Barhishad Pitris along with the Bhrigus and Atharvans and receive their own peculiar portion in the sacrifice, they are in the rest of the Veda also called upon in a less definite but a larger and more significant imagery. It is for the great human journey that they are invoked; for it is the human journey from the mortality to the immortality, from the falsehood to the truth that the Ancestors accomplished, opening the way to their descendants.

We see this characteristic of their working in VII.42 and VII.52. The first of these two hymns of Vasishtha is a Sukta in which the gods are invoked precisely for this great journey, *adhvara yajña*,[2] the sacrifice that travels or is a travel to the home of the godheads and at the same time a battle: for thus it is sung, "Easy of travelling for thee is the path, O Agni, and known to thee from of old. Yoke in the Soma-offering thy ruddy (or, actively-moving) mares which bear the hero. Seated, I call the births divine" (verse 2). What path is this? It is the path between the home of the gods and our earthly mortality down which the gods descend through the *antarikṣa*, the vital regions, to the earthly sacrifice and up which the sacrifice and man by the sacrifice ascends to the home of the gods. Agni yokes his mares, his variously-coloured energies or flames of the divine Force he represents, which bear the Hero, the battling power within us that performs the journey. And the births divine are at once the gods themselves and those manifestations of the divine life in man which are the Vedic meaning of the godheads. That this is the sense becomes clear from the fourth Rik. "When the

[2] Sayana takes *a-dhvara yajña*, the unhurt sacrifice; but "unhurt" can never have come to be used as a synonym of sacrifice. *Adhvara* is "travelling", "moving", connected with *adhvan*, a path or journey from the lost root *adh*, to move, extend, be wide, compact, etc. We see the connection between the two words *adhvan* and *adhvara* in *adhva*, air, sky and *adhvara* with the same sense. The passages in the Veda are numerous in which the *adhvara* or *adhvara yajña* is connected with the idea of travelling, journeying, advancing on the path.

Guest that lodges in the bliss has become conscious in knowledge in the gated house of the hero rich (in felicity), when Agni is perfectly satisfied and firmly lodged in the house, then he gives the desirable good to the creature that makes the journey" or, it may be, for his journeying.

The hymn is therefore an invocation to Agni for the journey to the supreme good, the divine birth, the bliss. And its opening verse is a prayer for the necessary conditions of the journey, the things that are said here to constitute the form of the pilgrim sacrifice, *adhvarasya peśaḥ*, and among these comes first the forward movement of the Angirases; "Forward let the Angirases travel, priests of the Word, forward go the cry of heaven (or, of the heavenly thing, cloud or lightning), forward move the fostering Cows that diffuse their waters, and let the two pressing-stones be yoked (to their work) — the form of the pilgrim sacrifice," *pra brahmāṇo aṅgiraso nakṣanta, pra krandanur nabhanyasya vetu; pra dhenava udapruto navanta, yujyātām adrī adhvarasya peśaḥ*. The Angirases with the divine Word, the cry of Heaven which is the voice of Swar the luminous heaven and of its lightnings thundering out from the Word, the divine waters or seven rivers that are set free to their flowing by that heavenly lightning of Indra the master of Swar, and with the outflowing of the divine waters the outpressing of the immortalising Soma, these constitute the form, *peśaḥ*, of the *adhvara yajña*. And its general characteristic is forward movement, the advance of all to the divine goal, as emphasised by the three verbs of motion, *nakṣanta*, *vetu*, *navanta* and the emphatic *pra*, forward, which opens and sets the key to each clause.

But the fifty-second hymn is still more significant and suggestive. The first Rik runs, "O Sons of the infinite Mother (*ādityāso*), may we become infinite beings (*aditayaḥ syāma*), may the Vasus protect in the godhead and the mortality (*devatrā martyatrā*); possessing may we possess you, O Mitra and Varuna, becoming may we become you, O Heaven and Earth," *sanema mitrāvaruṇā sananto, bhavema dyāvāpṛthivī bhavantaḥ*. This is evidently the sense that we are to possess and become the infinities or children of Aditi, the godheads,

aditayaḥ, *ādityāso*. Mitra and Varuna, we must remember, are powers of Surya Savitri, the Lord of the Light and the Truth. And the third verse runs, "May the Angirases who hasten through to the goal move in their travelling to the bliss of the divine Savitri; and that (bliss) may our great Father, he of the sacrifice, and all the gods becoming of one mind accept in heart." *Turaṇyavo nakṣanta ratnaṁ devasya savitur iyānāḥ*. It is quite clear therefore that the Angirases are travellers to the light and truth of the solar deity from which are born the luminous cows they wrest from the Panis and to the bliss which, as we always see, is founded on that light and truth. It is clear also that this journey is a growing into the godhead, into the infinite being (*aditayaḥ syāma*), said in this hymn (verse 2) to come by the growth of the peace and bliss through the action in us of Mitra, Varuna and the Vasus who protect us in the godhead and the mortality.

In these two hymns the Angiras Rishis generally are mentioned; but in others we have positive references to the human Fathers who first discovered the Light and possessed the Thought and the Word and travelled to the secret worlds of the luminous Bliss. In the light of the conclusions at which we have arrived, we can now study the more important passages, profound, beautiful and luminous, in which this great discovery of the human forefathers is hymned. We shall find there the summary of that great hope which the Vedic mystics held ever before their eyes; that journey, that victory is the ancient, primal achievement set as a type by the luminous Ancestors for the mortality that was to come after them. It was the conquest of the powers of the circumscribing Night (*rātrī paritakmyā*), Vritras, Sambaras and Valas, the Titans, Giants, Pythons, subconscient Powers who hold the light and the force in themselves, in their cities of darkness and illusion, but can neither use it aright nor will give it up to man, the mental being. Their ignorance, evil and limitation have not merely to be cut away from us, but broken up and into and made to yield up the secret of light and good and infinity. Out of this death that immortality has to be conquered. Pent up behind this ignorance is a secret knowledge

and a great light of truth; prisoned by this evil is an infinite content of good; in this limiting death is the seed of a boundless immortality. Vala, for example, is Vala of the radiances, *valaṁ gomantam*, his body is made of the light, *govapuṣaṁ valam*, his hole or cave is a city full of treasures; that body has to be broken up, that city rent open, those treasures seized. This is the work set for humanity and the Ancestors have done it for the race that the way may be known and the goal reached by the same means and through the same companionship with the gods of Light. "Let there be that ancient friendship between you gods and us as when with the Angirases who spoke aright the word, thou didst make to fall that which was fixed and slewest Vala as he rushed against thee, O achiever of works, and thou didst make to swing open all the doors of his city" (VI.18.5). At the beginning of all human traditions there is this ancient memory. It is Indra and the serpent Vritra, it is Apollo and the Python, it is Thor and the Giants, Sigurd and Fafner, it is the mutually opposing gods of the Celtic mythology; but only in the Veda do we find the key to this imagery which conceals the hope or the wisdom of a prehistoric humanity.

The first hymn we will take is one by the great Rishi, Vishwamitra, III.39; for it carries us right into the heart of our subject. It sets out with a description of the ancestral Thought, *pitryā dhīḥ*, the Thought of the fathers which can be no other than the Swar-possessing thought hymned by the Atris, the seven-headed thought discovered by Ayasya for the Navagwas; for in this hymn also it is spoken of in connection with the Angirases, the Fathers. "The thought expressing itself from the heart, formed into the Stoma, goes towards Indra its lord." Indra is, we have supposed, the Power of luminous Mind, master of the world of Light and its lightnings; the words or the thoughts are constantly imaged as cows or women, Indra as the Bull or husband, and the words desire him and are even spoken of as casting themselves upwards to seek him, e.g. I.9.4, *giraḥ prati tvām ud ahāsata vṛṣabhaṁ patim*. The luminous Mind of Swar is the goal sought by the Vedic thought and the Vedic speech which express the herd of the illuminations pressing upward from the soul, from

the cave of the subconscient in which they were penned; Indra master of Swar is the Bull, the lord of these herds, *gopatiḥ*.

The Rishi continues to describe the Thought. It is "the thought that when it is being expressed, remains wakeful in the knowledge," does not lend itself to the slumber of the Panis, *yā jāgṛvir vidathe śasyamānā*; "that which is born of thee (or, for thee), O Indra, of that take knowledge." This is a constant formula in the Veda. The god, the divine, has to take cognizance of what rises up to him in man, to become awake to it in the knowledge within us, (*viddhi*, *cetathaḥ*, etc.), otherwise it remains a human thing and does not "go to the gods", (*deveṣu gacchati*). And then, "It is ancient (or eternal), it is born from heaven; when it is being expressed, it remains wakeful in the knowledge; wearing white and happy robes, *this in us is the ancient thought of the fathers*," *seyam asme sanajā pitryā dhīḥ*. And then the Rishi speaks of this Thought as "the mother of twins, who here gives birth to the twins; on the tip of the tongue it descends and stands; the twin bodies when they are born cleave to each other and are slayers of darkness and move in the foundation of burning force." I will not now discuss what are these luminous twins, for that would carry us beyond the limits of our immediate subject: suffice it to say that they are spoken of elsewhere in connection with the Angirases and their establishment of the supreme birth (the plane of the Truth) as the twins in whom Indra places the word of the expression (I.83.3), that the burning force in whose foundation they move is evidently that of the Sun, the slayer of darkness, and this foundation is therefore identical with the supreme plane, the foundation of the Truth, *ṛtasya budhnaḥ*, and, finally, that they can hardly be wholly unconnected with the twin children of Surya, Yama and Yami, — Yama who in the tenth Mandala is associated with the Angiras Rishis.[3]

Having thus described the ancestral thought with its twin

[3] It is in the light of these facts that we must understand the colloquy of Yama and Yami in the tenth Mandala in which the sister seeks union with her brother and is put off to later generations, meaning really symbolic periods of time, the word for later signifying rather "higher", *uttara*.

children, slayers of darkness, Vishwamitra proceeds to speak of the ancient Fathers who first formed it and of the great victory by which they discovered "that Truth, the sun lying in the darkness". "None is there among mortals who can blame (or, as it rather seems to me to mean, no power of mortality that can confine or bind) our ancient fathers, they who were fighters for the cows; Indra of the mightiness, Indra of the achievement released upward for them the fortified pens, — there where, a comrade with his comrades, the fighters, the Navagwas, following on his knees the cows, Indra with the ten Dashagwas found that Truth, *satyaṁ tad*, even the sun dwelling in the darkness." This is the usual image of the conquest of the luminous cattle and the discovery of the hidden Sun; but in the next verse it is associated with two other related images which also occur frequently in the Vedic hymns, the pasture or field of the cow and the honey found in the cow. "Indra found the honey stored in the Shining One, the footed and hoofed (wealth) in the pasture[4] of the Cow." The Shining One, *usriyā* (also *usrā*), is another word which like *go* means both ray and cow and is used as a synonym of *go* in the Veda. We hear constantly of the *ghṛta* or clarified butter stored in the cow, hidden there by the Panis in three portions according to Vamadeva; but it is sometimes the honeyed *ghṛta* and sometimes simply the honey, *madhumad ghṛtam* and *madhu*. We have seen how closely the yield of the cow, the *ghṛta*, and the yield of the Soma plant are connected in other hymns and now that we know definitely what is meant by the Cow, this strange and incongruous connection becomes clear and simple enough. *Ghṛta* also means shining, it is the shining yield of the shining cow; it is the formed light of conscious knowledge in the mentality which is stored in the illumined consciousness and it is liberated by the liberation of the Cow: Soma is the delight, beatitude, Ananda inseparable from the illumined state of the being; and as there are, according to the Veda, three planes of mentality in us, so there are three portions of the *ghṛta* dependent on the

[4] *Name goḥ*. *Nama* from *nam* to move, range, Greek *nemō*; *nama* is the range, pasture, Greek *nomos*.

three gods Surya, Indra and Soma, and the Soma also is offered in three parts, on the three levels of the hill, *triṣu sānuṣu*. We may hazard the conjecture, having regard to the nature of the three gods, that Soma releases the divine light from the sense mentality, Indra from the dynamic mentality, Surya from the pure reflective mentality. As for the pasture of the cow we are already familiar with it; it is the field or *kṣetra* which Indra wins for his shining comrades from the Dasyu and in which the Atri beheld the warrior Agni and the luminous cows, those of whom even the old became young again. This field, *kṣetra*, is only another image for the luminous home (*kṣaya*) to which the gods by the sacrifice lead the human soul.

Vishwamitra then proceeds to indicate the real mystic sense of all this imagery. "He having Dakshina with him held in his right hand (*dakṣiṇe dakṣiṇāvān*) the secret thing that is placed in the secret cave and concealed in the waters. May he, knowing perfectly, separate the light from the darkness, *jyotir vṛṇīta tamaso vijānan*, may we be far from the presence of the evil." We have here a clue to the sense of this goddess Dakshina who seems in some passages to be a form or epithet of the Dawn and in others that which distributes the offerings in the sacrifice. Usha is the divine illumination and Dakshina is the discerning knowledge that comes with the dawn and enables the Power in the mind, Indra, to know aright and separate the light from the darkness, the truth from the falsehood, the straight from the crooked, *vṛṇīta vijānan*. The right and left hand of Indra are his two powers of action in knowledge; for his two arms are called *gabhasti*, a word which means ordinarily a ray of the sun but also forearm, and they correspond to his two perceptive powers, his two bright horses, *harī*, which are described as sun-eyed, *sūracakṣasā* and as vision-powers of the Sun, *sūryasya ketū*. Dakshina presides over the right-hand power, *dakṣiṇa*, and therefore we have the collocation *dakṣiṇe dakṣiṇāvān*. It is this discernment which presides over the right action of the sacrifice and the right distribution of the offerings and it is this which enables Indra to hold the herded wealth of the Panis securely, in his right hand. And finally we are told what is this secret thing

that was placed for us in the cave and is concealed in the waters of being, the waters in which the Thought of the Fathers has to be set, *apsu dhiyaṁ dadhiṣe*. It is the hidden Sun, the secret Light of our divine existence which has to be found and taken out by knowledge from the darkness in which it is concealed. That this light is not physical is shown by the word *vijānan*, for it is through right knowledge that it has to be found, and by the moral result, viz. that we go far from the presence of evil, *duritād*, literally, the wrong going, the stumbling to which we are subjected in the night of our being before the sun has been found, before the divine Dawn has arisen.

Once we have the key to the meaning of the Cows, the Sun, the Honey-Wine, all the circumstances of the Angiras legend and the action of the Fathers, which are such an incongruous patchwork in the ritualistic or naturalistic and so hopelessly impossible in the historical or Arya-Dravidian interpretation of the hymns, become on the contrary perfectly clear and connected and each throws light on the other. We understand each hymn in its entirety and in relation to other hymns; each isolated line, each passage, each scattered reference in the Vedas falls inevitably and harmoniously into a common whole. We know, here, how the Honey, the Bliss can be said to be stored in the Cow, the shining Light of the Truth; what is the connection of the honey-bearing Cow with the Sun, lord and origin of that Light; why the discovery of the Sun dwelling in the darkness is connected with the conquest or recovery of the cows of the Panis by the Angirases; why it is called the discovery of that Truth; what is meant by the footed and hoofed wealth and the field or pasture of the Cow. We begin to see what is the cave of the Panis and why that which is hidden in the lair of Vala is said also to be hidden in the waters released by Indra from the hold of Vritra, the seven rivers possessed by the seven-headed heaven-conquering thought of Ayasya; why the rescue of the sun out of the cave, the separation or choosing of the light out of the darkness is said to be done by an all-discerning knowledge; who are Dakshina and Sarama and what is meant by Indra holding the hoofed wealth in his right hand. And in arriving at

these conclusions we have not to wrest the sense of words, to interpret the same fixed term by different renderings according to our convenience of the moment or to render differently the same phrase or line in different hymns, or to make incoherence a standard of right interpretation; on the contrary, the greater the fidelity to word and form of the Riks, the more conspicuously the general and the detailed sense of the Veda emerge in a constant clearness and fullness.

We have therefore acquired the right to apply the sense we have discovered to other passages such as the hymn of Vasishtha which I shall next examine, VII.76, although to a superficial glance it would seem to be only an ecstatic picture of the physical Dawn. This first impression, however, disappears when we examine it; we see that there is a constant suggestion of a profounder meaning and, the moment we apply the key we have found, the harmony of the real sense appears. The hymn commences with a description of that rising of the Sun into the light of the supreme Dawn which is brought about by the gods and the Angirases. "Savitri, the god, the universal Male, has ascended into the Light that is immortal and of all the births, *jyotir amṛtaṁ viśvajanyam*; by the work (of sacrifice) the eye of the gods has been born (or, by the will-power of the gods vision has been born); Dawn has manifested the whole world (or, all that comes into being, all existences, *viśvaṁ bhuvanam*)." This immortal light into which the sun rises is elsewhere called the true light, *ṛtaṁ jyotiḥ*, Truth and immortality being constantly associated in the Veda. It is the light of the knowledge given by the seven-headed thought which Ayasya discovered when he became *viśvajanya*, universal in his being; therefore this light too is called *viśvajanya*, for it belongs to the fourth plane, the *turīyaṁ svid* of Ayasya, from which all the rest are born and by whose truth all the rest are manifested in their large universality and no longer in the limited terms of the falsehood and crookedness. Therefore it is called also the eye of the gods and the divine dawn that makes manifest the whole of existence.

The result of this birth of divine vision is that man's path manifests itself to him and those journeyings of the gods or to

the gods (*devayānāḥ*) which lead to the infinite wideness of the divine existence. "Before me the paths of the journeyings of the gods have become visible, journeyings that violate not, whose movement was formed by the Vasus. The eye of Dawn has come into being in front and she has come towards us (arriving) over our houses." The house in the Veda is the constant image for the bodies that are dwelling-places of the soul, just as the field or habitation means the planes to which it mounts and in which it rests. The path of man is that of his journey to the supreme plane and that which the journeyings of the gods do not violate is, as we see, in the fifth verse where the phrase is repeated, the workings of the gods, the divine law of life into which the soul has to grow. We have then a curious image which seems to support the Arctic theory. "Many were those days which were before the rising of the Sun (or which were of old by the rising of the Sun), in which thou, O Dawn, wert seen as if moving about thy lover and not coming again." This is certainly a picture of continual dawns, not interrupted by Night, such as are visible in the Arctic regions. The psychological sense which arises out of the verse, is obvious.

What were these dawns? They were those created by the actions of the Fathers, the ancient Angirases. "They indeed had the joy (of the Soma) along with the gods,[5] the ancient seers who possessed the truth; the fathers found the hidden Light; they, having the true thought (*satyamantrāḥ*, the true thought expressed in the inspired Word), brought into being the Dawn." And to what did the Dawn, the path, the divine journeying lead the Fathers? To the level wideness, *samāne ūrve*, termed elsewhere the unobstructed vast, *urau anibādhe*, which is evidently the same as that wide being or world which, according to Kanwa, men create when they slay Vritra and pass beyond heaven and earth; it is the vast Truth and the infinite being of Aditi. "In the level wideness they meet together and unite their knowledge (or, know perfectly) and strive not together; they

[5] I adopt provisionally the traditional rendering of *sadhamādaḥ* though I am not sure that it is the correct rendering.

diminish not (limit not or hurt not) the workings of the gods, not violating them they move (to their goal) by (the strength of) the Vasus." It is evident that the seven Angirases, whether human or divine, represent different principles of the Knowledge, Thought or Word, the seven-headed thought, the seven-mouthed word of Brihaspati, and in the level wideness these are harmonised in a universal knowledge; the error, crookedness, falsehood by which men violate the workings of the gods and by which different principles of their being, consciousness, knowledge enter into confused conflict with each other, have been removed by the eye or vision of the divine Dawn.

The hymn closes with the aspiration of the Vasishthas towards this divine and blissful Dawn as leader of the herds and mistress of plenty and again as leader of the felicity and the truths (*sūnṛtānām*). They desire to arrive at the same achievement as the primal seers, the fathers and it would follow that these are the human and not the divine Angirases. In any case the sense of the Angiras legend is fixed in all its details, except the exact identity of the Panis and the hound Sarama, and we can turn to the consideration of the passages in the opening hymns of the fourth Mandala in which the human fathers are explicitly mentioned and their achievement described. These hymns of Vamadeva are the most illuminating and important for this aspect of the Angiras legend and they are in themselves among the most interesting in the Rig Veda.

Chapter XIX

The Victory of the Fathers

THE HYMNS addressed by the great Rishi Vamadeva to the divine Flame, to the Seer-Will, Agni are among the most mystic in expression in the Rig Veda and though quite plain in their sense if we hold firmly in our mind the system of significant figures employed by the Rishis, will otherwise seem only a brilliant haze of images baffling our comprehension. The reader has at every moment to apply that fixed notation which is the key to the sense of the hymns; otherwise he will be as much at a loss as a reader of metaphysics who has not mastered the sense of the philosophical terms that are being constantly used or, let us say, one who tries to read Panini's Sutras without knowing the peculiar system of grammatical notation in which they are expressed. We have, however, already enough light upon this system of images to understand well enough what Vamadeva has to tell us about the great achievement of the human forefathers.

In order to hold clearly in our minds at the start what that great achievement was we may put before ourselves the clear and sufficient formulas in which Parashara Shaktya expresses them. "Our fathers broke open the firm and strong places by their words, yea, the Angirases broke open the hill by their cry; they made in us the path to the great heaven; they found the Day and Swar and vision and the luminous Cows," *cakrur divo bṛhato gātum asme, ahaḥ svar vividuḥ ketum usrāḥ,* (I.71.2). This path, he tells us, is the path which leads to immortality; "they who entered into all things that bear right fruit formed a path towards the immortality; earth stood wide for them by the greatness and by the Great Ones, the mother Aditi with her sons came (or, manifested herself) for the upholding" (I.72.9).[1] That

[1] *Ā ye viśvā svapatyāni tasthuḥ, kṛṇvānāso amṛtatvāya gātum; mahnā mahadbhiḥ pṛthivī vi tasthe, mātā putrair aditir dhāyase veḥ.*

is to say, the physical being visited by the greatness of the infinite planes above and by the power of the great godheads who reign on those planes breaks its limits, opens out to the Light and is upheld in its new wideness by the infinite Consciousness, mother Aditi, and her sons, the divine Powers of the supreme Deva. This is the Vedic immortality.

The means of this finding and expanding are also very succinctly stated by Parashara in his mystic, but still clear and impressive style. "They held the truth, they enriched its thought; then indeed, aspiring souls (*aryaḥ*), they, holding it in thought, bore it diffused in all their being," *dadhann ṛtaṁ dhanayann asya dhītim, ād id aryo didhiṣvo vibhṛtrāḥ,* (I.71.3). The image in *vibhṛtrāḥ* suggests the upholding of the thought of the Truth in all the principles of our being or, to put it in the ordinary Vedic image, the seven-headed thought in all the seven waters, *apsu dhiyaṁ dadhiṣe*, as we have seen it elsewhere expressed in almost identical language; this is shown by the image that immediately follows, — "the doers of the work go towards the unthirsting (waters) which increase the divine births by the satisfaction of delight," *atṛṣyantīr apaso yanti acchā, devān janma prayasā vardhayantīḥ.* The sevenfold Truth-consciousness in the satisfied sevenfold Truth-being increasing the divine births in us by the satisfaction of the soul's hunger for the Beatitude, this is the growth of immortality. It is the manifestation of that trinity of divine being, light and bliss which the Vedantins afterwards called Sachchidananda.

The sense of this universal diffusion of Truth and the birth and activity of all the godheads in us assuring a universal and immortal life in place of our present limited mortality is made yet clearer by Parashara in I.68. Agni, the divine Seer-Will, is described as ascending to heaven and unrolling the veil of the nights from all that is stable and all that is mobile, "when he becomes the one God encompassing all these godheads with the greatness of his being. Then indeed all accept and cleave to the Will (or the Work) when, O godhead, thou art born a living soul from the dryness (i.e. from the material being, the desert, as it is called, unwatered by the streams of the Truth);

all enjoy godhead attaining to the truth and the immortality by their movements, *bhajanta viśve devatvaṁ nāma, ṛtaṁ sapanto amṛtam evaiḥ*. The impulse of the Truth, the thinking of the Truth becomes a universal life (or pervades all the life), and in it all fulfil their workings," *ṛtasya preṣā ṛtasya dhītir, viśvāyur viśve apāṁsi cakruḥ*.

And in order that we may not, haunted by the unfortunate misconstruction of the Veda which European scholarship has imposed on the modern mind, carry with us the idea of the seven earthly rivers of the Punjab into the super-terrestrial achievement of the human forefathers, we will note what Parashara in his clear and illuminating fashion tells us about the seven rivers. "The fostering cows of the Truth (*dhenavaḥ*, an image applied to the rivers, while *gāvaḥ* or *usrāḥ* expresses the luminous cows of the Sun) nourished him, lowing, with happy udders, enjoyed in heaven; obtaining right thinking as a boon from the supreme (plane) the rivers flowed wide and evenly over the hill," *ṛtasya hi dhenavo vāvaśānāḥ, smadūdhnīḥ pīpayanta dyubhaktāḥ; parāvataḥ sumatiṁ bhikṣamāṇā, vi sindhavaḥ samayā sasrur adrim,* (I.73.6). And in I.72.8, speaking of them in a phrase which is applied to the rivers in other hymns, he says, "The seven mighty ones of heaven, placing aright the thought, knowing the Truth, discerned in knowledge the doors of felicity; Sarama found the fastness, the wideness of the luminous cows; thereby the human creature enjoys the bliss," *svādhyo diva ā sapta yahvī, rāyo duro vi ṛtajñā ajānan; vidad gavyaṁ saramā dṛḍham ūrvaṁ, yenā nu kaṁ mānuṣī bhojate viṭ*. These are evidently not the waters of the Punjab, but the rivers of Heaven, the streams of the Truth,[2] goddesses like Saraswati, who possess the Truth in knowledge and open by it the doors of the beatitude to the human creature. We see here too what I have already insisted on, that there is a close connection between the finding of the Cows and the outflowing of the Rivers; they are parts

[2] Note that in I.32 Hiranyastupa Angirasa describes the waters released from Vritra as "ascending the mind", *mano ruhāṇāḥ*, and elsewhere they are called the waters that have the knowledge, *āpo vicetasaḥ* (I.83.1).

of one action, the achievement of the truth and immortality by men, *ṛtaṁ sapanto amṛtam evaiḥ*.

It is now perfectly clear that the achievement of the Angirases is the conquest of the Truth and the Immortality, that Swar called also the great heaven, *bṛhat dyauḥ*, is the plane of the Truth above the ordinary heaven and earth which can be no other than the ordinary mental and physical being; that the path of the great heaven, the path of the Truth created by the Angirases and followed by the hound Sarama is the path to the Immortality, *amṛtatvāya gātum*; that the vision (*ketu*) of the Dawn, the Day won by the Angirases, is the vision proper to the Truth-consciousness; that the luminous cows of the Sun and Dawn wrested from the Panis are the illuminations of this truth-consciousness which help to form the thought of the Truth, *ṛtasya dhītiḥ*, complete in the seven-headed thought of Ayasya; that the Night of the Veda is the obscured consciousness of the mortal being in which the Truth is subconscient, hidden in the cave of the hill; that the recovery of the lost sun lying in this darkness of Night is the recovery of the sun of Truth out of the darkened subconscient condition; and that the downflowing earthward of the seven rivers must be the outstreaming action of the sevenfold principle of our being as it is formulated in the Truth of the divine or immortal existence. Equally then must the Panis be the powers that prevent the Truth from emerging out of the subconscient condition and that constantly strive to steal its illuminations from man and throw him back into the Night, and Vritra must be the power that obstructs and prevents the free movement of the illumined rivers of the Truth, obstructs the impulsion of the Truth in us, *ṛtasya preṣā*, the luminous impulsion, *jyotiṣmatīm iṣam*, which carries us beyond the Night to the immortality. And the gods, the sons of Aditi, must be on the contrary the luminous divine powers, born of the infinite consciousness Aditi, whose formation and activity in our human and mortal being are necessary for our growth into the godhead, into the being of the Deva (*devatvam*) which is the Immortality. Agni, the truth-conscious seer-will, is the principal godhead who enables us to effect the sacrifice; he leads it on the path of the

Truth, he is the warrior of the battle, the doer of the work, and his unity and universality in us comprehending in itself all the other godheads is the basis of the Immortality. The plane of the Truth to which we arrive is his own home and the own home of the other gods, and the final home also of the soul of man. And this immortality is described as a beatitude, a state of infinite spiritual wealth and plenitude, *ratna*, *rayi*, *vāja*, *rādhas*, etc.; the opening doors of our divine home are the doors of the felicity, *rāyo duraḥ*, the divine doors which swing wide open to those who increase the Truth (*ṛtāvṛdhaḥ*) and which are discovered for us by Saraswati and her sisters, by the seven Rivers, by Sarama; to them and to the wide pasture (*kṣetra*) in the unobstructed and equal infinities of the vast Truth Brihaspati and Indra lead upward the shining Herds.

With these conceptions clearly fixed in our minds we shall be able to understand the verses of Vamadeva which only repeat in symbolic language the substance of the thought expressed more openly by Parashara. It is to Agni the Seer-Will that Vamadeva's opening hymns are addressed. He is hymned as the friend or builder of man's sacrifice who awakes him to the vision, the knowledge (*ketu*), *sa cetayan manuṣo yajñabandhuḥ* (IV.1.9); so doing, "he dwells in the gated homes of this being, accomplishing; he, a god, has come to be the means of accomplishment of the mortal," *sa kṣeti asya duryāsu sādhan, devo martasya sadhanitvam āpa.* What is it that he accomplishes? The next verse tells us. "May this Agni lead us in his knowledge towards that bliss of him which is enjoyed by the gods, that which by the thought all the immortals created and Dyauspita the father out-pouring the Truth"; *sa tū no agnir nayatu prajānann, acchā ratnaṁ devabhaktaṁ yad asya; dhiyā yad viśve amṛtā akṛṇvan, dyauṣpitā janitā satyam ukṣan.* This is Parashara's beatitude of the Immortality created by all the powers of the immortal godhead doing their work in the thought of the Truth and in its impulsion, and the out-pouring of the Truth is evidently the out-pouring of the waters as is indicated by the word *ukṣan*, Parashara's equal diffusion of the seven rivers of the truth over the hill.

Vamadeva then goes on to tell us of the birth of this great, first or supreme force, Agni, in the Truth, in its waters, in its original home. "He was born, the first, in the waters, in the foundation of the vast world (Swar), in its womb, (i.e. its seat and birthplace, its original home); without head and feet, concealing his two extremities, setting himself to his work in the lair of the Bull." The Bull is the Deva or Purusha, his lair is the plane of the Truth, and Agni the Seer-Will, working in the truth-consciousness, creates the worlds; but he conceals his two extremities, his head and feet; that is to say, his workings act between the superconscient and the subconscient in which his highest and his lowest states are respectively concealed, one in an utter light, the other in an utter darkness. From that he goes forth as the first and supreme force and is born to the Bull or the Lord by the action of the seven powers of the Bliss, the seven Beloved. "He went forward by illumined knowledge as the first force, in the seat of the Truth, in the lair of the Bull, desirable, young, full in body, shining wide; the seven Beloved bore him to the Lord."

The Rishi then comes to the achievement of the human fathers, *asmākam atra pitaro manuṣyā, abhi pra sedur ṛtam āśuṣāṇāḥ*: "Here our human fathers seeking possession of the Truth went forward to it; the bright cows in their covering prison, the good milkers whose pen is in the rock they drove upward (to the Truth), the Dawns answered their call. They rent the hill asunder and made them bright; others all around them declared wide this (Truth) of theirs; drivers of the herds they sang the hymn to the doer of works (Agni), they found the light, they shone in their thoughts (or, they accomplished the work by their thoughts). They with the mind that seeks the light (the cows, *gavyatā manasā*) rent the firm and compact hill that environed the luminous cows; the souls that desire opened by the divine word, *vacasā daivyena*, the firm pen full of the kine." These are the ordinary images of the Angiras legend, but in the next verse Vamadeva uses a still more mystic language. "They conceived in mind the first name of the fostering cows, they found the thrice seven supreme (seats) of the Mother; the

females of the herd knew that and they followed after it; the ruddy one was manifested by the victorious attainment (or, the splendour) of the cow of Light," *te manvata prathamaṁ nāma dhenos, triḥ sapta mātuḥ paramāṇi vindan; taj jānatīr abhyanūṣata vrā, āvirbhuvad aruṇīr yaśasā goḥ*. The Mother here is Aditi, the infinite consciousness, who is the Dhenu or fostering Cow with the seven rivers for her sevenfold streaming as well as Go the Cow of Light with the Dawns for her children; the Ruddy One is the divine Dawn and the herd or rays are her dawning illuminations. The first name of the Mother with her thrice seven supreme seats, that which the dawns or mental illuminations know and move towards, must be the name or deity of the supreme Deva, who is infinite being and infinite consciousness and infinite bliss, and the seats are the three divine worlds, called earlier in the hymn the three supreme births of Agni, Satya, Tapas and Jana of the Puranas, which correspond to these three infinities of the Deva and each fulfils in its own way the sevenfold principle of our existence: thus we get the series of thrice seven seats of Aditi manifested in all her glory by the opening out of the Dawn of Truth.[3] Thus we see that the achievement of the Light and Truth by the human fathers is also an ascent to the Immortality of the supreme and divine status, to the first name of the all-creating infinite Mother, to her thrice seven supreme degrees of this ascending existence, to the highest levels of the eternal hill (*sānu*, *adri*).

This immortality is the beatitude enjoyed by the gods of which Vamadeva has already spoken as the thing which Agni has to accomplish by the sacrifice, the supreme bliss with its thrice seven ecstasies (I.20.7). For he proceeds; "Vanished the darkness, shaken in its foundation; Heaven shone out (*rocata dyauḥ*, implying the manifestation of the three luminous worlds of Swar, *divo rocanāni*); upward rose the light of the divine Dawn; the Sun entered the vast fields (of the Truth) beholding the straight

[3] The same idea is expressed by Medhatithi Kanwa (I.20.7) as the thrice seven ecstasies of the Beatitude, *ratnāni triḥ sāptāni*, or more literally, the ecstasies in their three series of seven, each of which the Ribhus bring out in their separate and complete expression, *ekam ekaṁ suśastibhiḥ*.

things and the crooked in mortals. Thereafter indeed they awoke and saw utterly (by the sun's separation of the straight from the crooked, the truth from the falsehood); then indeed they held in them the bliss that is enjoyed in heaven, *ratnaṁ dhārayanta dyubhaktam*. Let all the gods be in all our homes, let there be the truth for our thought, O Mitra, O Varuna"; *viśve viśvāsu duryāsu devā, mitra dhiye varuṇa satyam astu*. This is evidently the same idea as has been expressed in different language by Parashara Shaktya, the pervasion of the whole existence by the thought and impulse of the Truth and the working of all the godheads in that thought and impulsion to create in every part of our existence the bliss and the immortality.

The hymn closes thus: "May I speak the word towards Agni shining pure, the priest of the offering greatest in sacrifice who brings to us the all; may he press out both the pure udder of the Cows of Light and the purified food of the plant of delight (the Soma) poured out everywhere. He is the infinite being of all the lords of sacrifice (the gods) and the guest of all human beings; may Agni, accepting into himself the increasing manifestation of the gods, knower of the births, be a giver of happiness."

In the second hymn of the fourth Mandala we get very clearly and suggestively the parallelism of the seven Rishis who are the divine Angirases and the human fathers. The passage is preceded by four verses, IV.2.11-14, which bring in the idea of the human seeking after the Truth and the Bliss. "May he the knower discern perfectly the Knowledge and the Ignorance, the wide levels and the crooked that shut in mortals; and, O God, for a bliss fruitful in offspring, lavish on us Diti and protect Aditi." This eleventh verse is very striking in its significance. We have the opposition of the Knowledge and the Ignorance familiar to Vedanta; and the Knowledge is likened to the wide open levels which are frequently referred to in the Veda; they are the large levels to which those ascend who labour in the sacrifice and they find there Agni seated self-blissful (V.7.5); they are the wide being which he makes for his own body (V.4.6), the level wideness, the unobstructed vast. It is therefore the infinite being of the Deva to which we arrive on the plane of the Truth, and it contains

the thrice seven supreme seats of Aditi the Mother, the three supreme births of Agni within the Infinite, *anante antaḥ* (IV.1.7). The Ignorance on the other hand is identified with the crooked or uneven levels[4] which shut in mortals and it is therefore the limited, divided mortal existence. Moreover it is evident that the Ignorance is the Diti of the next half-verse, *ditiṁ ca rāsva aditim uruṣya*, and the Knowledge is Aditi. Diti, called also Danu, means division and the obstructing powers or Vritras are her children, Dānus, Dānavas, Daityas, while Aditi is existence in its infinity and the mother of the gods. The Rishi desires a bliss fruitful in offspring, that is in divine works and their results and this is to be effected through the conquest of all the riches held in itself by our divided mortal being but kept from us by the Vritras and Panis and through the holding of them in the infinite divine being. The latter is to be in us protected from the ordinary tendency of our human existence, from subjection to the sons of Danu or Diti. The idea is evidently identical with that of the Isha Upanishad which declares the possession of the Knowledge and the Ignorance, the unity and the multiplicity in the one Brahman as the condition for the attainment of Immortality.

We then come to the seven divine seers. "The seers unconquered declared the Seer (the Deva, Agni) holding him within in the homes of the human being; thence (from this embodied human being) mayst thou, O Agni, aspiring by the work (*aryaḥ*), behold by thy advancing movements these of whom thou must have the vision, the transcendent ones (the godheads of the Deva)"; *kaviṁ śaśāsuḥ kavayo adabdhā, nidhārayanto duryāsu āyoḥ; atas tvaṁ dṛśyān agna etān, paḍbhiḥ paśyer adbhutān arya evaiḥ*. This is again the journey to the vision of the Godhead. "Thou, O Agni, youngest power, art the perfect guide (on that journey) to him who sings the word and offers the Soma and orders the sacrifice; bring to the illumined who accomplishes the

[4] *Cittim acittiṁ cinavad vi vidvān, pṛṣṭheva vītā vṛjinā ca martān. Vṛjina* means crooked, and is used in the Veda to indicate the crookedness of the falsehood as opposed to the open straightness of the Truth, but the poet has evidently in his mind the verbal sense of *vṛj*, to separate, screen off, and it is this verbal sense in the adjective that governs *martān*.

work the bliss with its vast delight for his increasing, satisfying the doer of the work (or, the man, *carṣaṇiprāḥ*). Now, O Agni, of all that we have done with our hands and our feet and our bodies the right thinkers (the Angirases) make as it were thy chariot by the work of the two arms (Heaven and Earth, *bhurijoḥ*); seeking to possess the Truth they have worked their way to it (or won control of it)," *ṛtaṁ yemuḥ sudhya āśuṣāṇāḥ*. "Now as the seven seers of Dawn the Mother, the supreme disposers (of the sacrifice), may we beget for ourselves the gods; may we become the Angirases, sons of Heaven, breaking open the wealth-filled hill, shining in purity." We have here very clearly the seven divine Seers as the supreme ordainers of the world-sacrifice and the idea of the human being "becoming" these seven Seers, that is to say, creating them in himself and growing into that which they mean, just as he becomes the Heaven and Earth and the other gods or, as it is otherwise put, begets or creates or forms (*jan*, *kṛ*, *tan*) the divine births in his own being.

Next the example of the human fathers is given as the original type of this great becoming and achievement. "Now also, even as our supreme ancient fathers, O Agni, seeking to possess the Truth, expressing the Word, travelled to the purity and the light; breaking open the earth (the material being) they uncovered the ruddy ones (the Dawns, the Cows); perfected in works and in light, seeking the godheads, gods, forging the Births like iron (or, forging the divine births like iron), making Agni a pure flame, increasing Indra, they attained and reached the wideness of the Light (of the Cows, *gavyam ūrvam*). As if herds of the Cow in the field of riches, that was manifested to vision which is the Births of the Gods within, O puissant One; they both accomplished the wide enjoyments (or, longings) of mortals and worked as aspirers for the increase of the higher being"; *ā yūtheva kṣumati paśvo akhyad, devānāṁ yaj janimā anti ugra; martānāṁ cid urvaśīr akṛpran, vṛdhe cid arya uparasya āyoḥ*. Evidently, this is a repetition in other language of the double idea of possessing the riches of Diti, yet safeguarding Aditi. "We have done the work for thee, we have become perfect in works, the wide-shining Dawns have taken up their home in the Truth

(or, have robed themselves with the Truth), in the fullness of Agni and his manifold delight, in the shining eye of the god in all his brightness."

The Angirases are again mentioned in IV.3.11, and some of the expressions which lead up to this verse, are worth noting; for it cannot be too often repeated that no verse in the Veda can be properly understood except by reference to its context, to its place in the thought of the Sukta, to all that precedes and all that follows. The hymn opens with a call to men to create Agni who sacrifices in the truth, to create him in his form of golden light (*hiraṇyarūpam*, the gold being always the symbol of the solar light of the Truth, *ṛtaṁ jyotiḥ*) before the Ignorance can form itself, *purā tanayitnor acittāt*. The god is asked to awaken to the work of man and the truth in him as being himself "the Truth-conscious who places aright the thought", *ṛtasya bodhi ṛtacit svādhīḥ*, — for all falsehood is merely a wrong placing of the Truth. He is to refer all fault and sin and defect in man to the various godheads or divine powers of the Divine Being so that it may be removed and the man declared finally blameless before the Infinite Mother — *aditaye anāgasaḥ*, or for the infinite existence, as it is elsewhere expressed.

Then in the ninth and tenth verses we have, expressed in various formulas, the idea of the united human and divine existence, Diti and Aditi, the latter founding, controlling and flooding with itself the former. "The Truth controlled by the Truth I desire (i.e. the human by the divine), together the unripe things of the Cow and her ripe and honeyed yield (again the imperfect human and the perfect and blissful divine fruits of the universal consciousness and existence); she (the cow) being black (the dark and divided existence, Diti) is nourished by the shining water of the foundation, the water of the companion streams (*jāmaryeṇa payasā*). By the Truth Agni the Bull, the Male, sprinkled with the water of its levels, ranges unquivering, establishing wideness (wide space or manifestation); the dappled Bull milks the pure shining teat." The symbolic opposition between the shining white purity of the One who is the source, seat, foundation and the variegated colouring of the Life manifested

in the triple world is frequent in the Veda; this image of the dappled Bull and the pure-bright udder or source of the waters only repeats therefore, like the other images, the idea of the multiple manifestations of the human life purified, tranquillised in its activities, fed by the waters of the Truth and the Infinity.

Finally the Rishi proceeds to the coupling, which we so repeatedly find, of the luminous Cows and the Waters. "By the Truth the Angirases broke open and hurled asunder the hill and came to union with the Cows; human souls, they took up their dwelling in the blissful Dawn, Swar became manifest when Agni was born. By Truth the divine immortal waters, unoppressed, with their honeyed floods, O Agni, like a horse breasting forward in its gallopings ran in an eternal flowing." These four verses in fact are meant to give the preliminary conditions for the great achievement of the Immortality. They are the symbols of the grand Mythus, the mythus of the Mystics in which they hid their supreme spiritual experience from the profane and, alas! effectively enough from their posterity. That they were secret symbols, images meant to reveal the truth which they protected but only to the initiated, to the knower, to the seer, Vamadeva himself tells us in the most plain and emphatic language in the last verse of this very hymn; "All these are secret words that I have uttered to thee who knowest, O Agni, O Disposer, words of leading, words of seer-knowledge that express their meaning to the seer, — I have spoken them illumined in my words and my thinkings"; *etā viśvā viduṣe tubhyaṁ vedho, nīthāni agne niṇyā vacāṁsi; nivacanā kavaye kāvyāni, aśaṁsiṣaṁ matibhir vipra ukthaiḥ*. Secret words that have kept indeed their secret ignored by the priest, the ritualist, the grammarian, the pandit, the historian, the mythologist, to whom they have been words of darkness or seals of confusion and not what they were to the supreme ancient forefathers and their illumined posterity, *niṇyā vacāṁsi nīthāni nivacanā kāvyāni.*

Chapter XX

The Hound of Heaven

THERE yet remain two constant features of the Angiras legend with regard to which we have to acquire a little farther light in order to master entirely this Vedic conception of the Truth and the discovery of the illuminations of the Dawn by the primeval Fathers; we have to fix the identity of Sarama and the exact function of the Panis, two problems of Vedic interpretation which are very closely related to each other. That Sarama is some power of the Light and probably of the Dawn is very clear; for once we know that the struggle between Indra and the original Aryan seers on the one hand and the sons of the Cave on the other is no strange deformation of primitive Indian history but a symbolic struggle between the powers of Light and Darkness, Sarama who leads in the search for the radiant herds and discovers both the path and the secret hold in the mountain must be a forerunner of the dawn of Truth in the human mind. And if we ask ourselves what power among the truth-finding faculties it is that thus discovers out of the darkness of the unknown in our being the truth that is hidden in it, we at once think of the intuition. For Sarama is not Saraswati, she is not the inspiration, even though the names are similar. Saraswati gives the full flood of the knowledge; she is or awakens the great stream, *maho arṇaḥ*, and illumines with plenitude all the thoughts, *dhiyo viśvā vi rājati*. Saraswati possesses and is the flood of the Truth; Sarama is the traveller and seeker on its path who does not herself possess but rather finds that which is lost. Neither is she the plenary word of the revelation, the Teacher of man like the goddess Ila; for even when what she seeks is found, she does not take possession but only gives the message to the seers and their divine helpers who have still to fight for the possession of the light that has been discovered.

Let us see, however, what the Veda itself says of Sarama.

There is a verse, I.104.5, which does not mention her name, nor is the hymn itself about the Angirases or Panis, yet the line describes accurately enough the part attributed to her in the Veda: — "When this guide became visible, she went, knowing, towards the seat that is as if the home of the Dasyu," *prati yat syā nīthā adarśi dasyor, oko na acchā sadanaṁ jānatī gāt*. These are the two essential characteristics of Sarama; the knowledge comes to her beforehand, before vision, springs up instinctively at the least indication and with that knowledge she guides the rest of the faculties and divine powers that seek. And she leads to that seat, *sadanam*, the home of the Destroyers, which is at the other pole of existence to the seat of the Truth, *sadanam ṛtasya*, in the cave or secret place of darkness, *guhāyām*, just as the home of the gods is in the cave or secrecy of light. In other words, she is a power descended from the superconscient Truth which leads us to the light that is hidden in ourselves, in the subconscient. All these characteristics apply exactly to the intuition.

Sarama is mentioned by name only in a few hymns of the Veda, and invariably in connection with the achievement of the Angirases or the winning of the highest planes of existence. The most important of these hymns is the Sukta of the Atris we have already had to take note of in our scrutiny of the Navagwa and Dashagwa Angirases, V.45. The first three verses summarise the great achievement. "Severing the hill of heaven by the words he found them, yea, the radiant ones of the arriving Dawn went abroad; he uncovered those that were in the pen, Swar rose up; a god opened the human doors. The Sun attained widely to strength and glory; the Mother of the Cows (the Dawn), knowing, came from the wideness; the rivers became rushing floods, floods that cleft (their channel), heaven was made firm like a well-shaped pillar. To this word the contents of the pregnant hill (came forth) for the supreme birth of the Great Ones (the rivers or, less probably, the dawns); the hill parted asunder, heaven was perfected (or, accomplished itself); they lodged (upon earth) and distributed the largeness." It is of Indra and the Angirases that the Rishi is speaking, as the rest of the hymn shows and

as is indeed evident from the expressions used; for these are the usual formulas of the Angiras mythus and repeat the exact expressions that are constantly used in the hymns of the delivery of the Dawn, the Cows and the Sun. We know already what they mean. The hill of our already formed triple existence which rises into heaven at its summit is rent asunder by Indra and the hidden illuminations go abroad; Swar, the higher heaven of the superconscient, is manifested by the upward streaming of the brilliant herds. The sun of Truth diffuses all the strength and glory of its light, the inner Dawn comes from the luminous wideness instinct with knowledge, — *jānatī gāt*, the same phrase that is used of her who leads to the house of the Dasyu in I.104.5; and of Sarama in III.31.6, — the rivers of the Truth, representing the outflow of its being and its movement (*ṛtasya preṣā*), descend in their rushing streams and make a channel here for their waters; heaven, the mental being, is perfected and made firm like a well-shaped pillar to support the vast Truth of the higher or immortal life that is now made manifest and the largeness of that Truth is lodged here in all the physical being. The delivery of the pregnant contents of the hill, *parvatasya garbhaḥ*, the illuminations constituting the seven-headed thought, *ṛtasya dhītiḥ*, which come forth in answer to the inspired word, leads to the supreme birth of the seven great rivers who constitute the substance of the Truth put into active movement, *ṛtasya preṣā*.

Then after the invocation of Indra and Agni by the "words of perfect speech that are loved of the gods", — for by those words the Maruts[1] perform the sacrifices as seers who by their seer-knowledge do well the sacrificial work, *ukthebhir hi ṣmā kavayaḥ suyajñā . . . maruto yajanti*, — the Rishi next puts into the mouth of men an exhortation and mutual encouragement to do even as the Fathers and attain the same divine results. "Come now, today let us become perfected in thought, let us destroy suffering and unease, let us embrace the higher good," *eto nu adya sudhyo bhavāma, pra ducchunā minavāma ā varīyaḥ*; "far from us let us put always all hostile things (all the things

[1] The thought-attaining powers of the Life as will appear hereafter.

that attack and divide, *dveṣāṁsi*); let us go forward towards the Master of the sacrifice. Come, let us create the Thought, O friends, (obviously, the seven-headed Angiras-thought), which is the Mother (Aditi or the Dawn) and removes the screening pen of the Cow." The significance is clear enough; it is in such passages as these that the inner sense of the Veda half disengages itself from the veil of the symbol.

Then the Rishi speaks of the great and ancient example which men are called upon to repeat, the example of the Angirases, the achievement of Sarama. "Here the stone was set in motion whereby the Navagwas chanted the hymn for the ten months, Sarama going to the Truth found the cows, the Angiras made all things true. When in the dawning of this vast One (Usha representing the infinite Aditi, *mātā devānām aditer anīkam*) all the Angirases came together with the cows (or rather, perhaps by the illuminations represented in the symbol of the cows or Rays); there was the fountain of these (illuminations) in the supreme world; by the path of the Truth Sarama found the cows." Here we see that it is through the movement of Sarama going straight to the Truth by the path of the Truth, that the seven seers, representing the seven-headed or seven-rayed thought of Ayasya and Brihaspati, find all the concealed illuminations and by force of these illuminations they all come together, as we have been already told by Vasishtha, in the level wideness, *samāne ūrve*, from which the Dawn has descended with the knowledge (*ūrvād jānatī gāt*, v. 2) or, as it is here expressed, in the dawning of this vast One, that is to say, in the infinite consciousness. There, as Vasishtha has said, they, united, agree in knowledge and do not strive together, *saṅgatāsaḥ saṁ jānate na yatante mithas te*, that is to say, the seven become as one, as is indicated in another hymn; they become the one seven-mouthed Angiras, an image corresponding to that of the seven-headed thought, and it is this single unified Angiras who makes all things true as the result of Sarama's discovery (verse 7). The harmonised, united, perfected Seer-Will corrects all falsehood and crookedness and turns all thought, life, action into terms of the Truth. In this hymn also the action of Sarama is precisely that of the Intuition

which goes straight to the Truth by the straight path of the Truth and not through the crooked paths of doubt and error and which delivers the Truth out of the veil of darkness and false appearances; it is through the illuminations discovered by her that the Seer-mind can attain to the complete revelation of the Truth. The rest of the hymn speaks of the rising of the seven-horsed Sun towards his "field which spreads wide for him at the end of the long journey", the attainment of the swift Bird to the Soma and of the young Seer to that field of the luminous cows, the Sun's ascent to the "luminous Ocean", its crossing over it "like a ship guided by the thinkers" and the descent upon man of the waters of that ocean in response to their call. In those waters the sevenfold thought of the Angiras is established by the human seer. If we remember that the Sun represents the light of the superconscient or truth-conscious knowledge and the luminous ocean the realms of the superconscient with their thrice seven seats of the Mother Aditi, the sense of these symbolic expressions[2] will not be difficult to understand. It is the highest attainment of the supreme goal which follows upon the complete achievement of the Angirases, their united ascent to the plane of the Truth, just as that achievement follows upon the discovery of the herds by Sarama.

Another hymn of great importance in this connection is the thirty-first of the third Mandala, by Vishwamitra. "Agni (the Divine Force) is born quivering with his flame of the offering for sacrifice to the great Sons of the Shining One (the Deva, Rudra); great is the child of them, a vast birth; there is a great movement of the Driver of the shining steeds (Indra, the Divine Mind) by the sacrifices. The conquering (dawns) cleave to him in his struggle, they deliver by knowledge a great light out of the darkness; knowing the Dawns rise up to him, Indra has become the one lord of the luminous cows. The cows who were in the strong place (of the Panis) the thinkers clove out; by the mind the

[2] It is in this sense that we can easily understand many now obscure expressions of the Veda, e.g. VIII.68.9, "May we conquer by thy aid in our battles the great wealth in the waters and the Sun," *apsu sūrye mahad dhanam*.

seven seers set them moving forward (or upwards towards the supreme), they found the entire path (goal or field of travel) of the Truth; knowing those (supreme seats of the Truth) Indra by the obeisance entered into them," *vīḷau satīr abhi dhīrā atṛndan, prācā ahinvan manasā sapta viprāḥ; viśvām avindan pathyām ṛtasya, prajānann it tā namasā viveśa*. This is, as usual, the great birth, the great light, the great divine movement of the Truth-knowledge with the finding of the goal and the entry of the gods and the seers into the supreme planes above. Next we have the part of Sarama in this work. "When Sarama found the broken place of the hill, he (or perhaps she, Sarama) made continuous the great and supreme goal. She, the fair-footed, led him to the front of the imperishable ones (the unslayable cows of the Dawn); first she went, knowing, towards their cry." It is again the Intuition that leads; knowing, she speeds at once and in front of all towards the voice of the concealed illuminations, towards the place where the hill so firmly formed and impervious in appearance (*vīḷu*, *dṛḍha*) is broken and can admit the seekers.

The rest of the hymn continues to describe the achievement of the Angirases and Indra. "He went, the greatest seer of them all, doing them friendship; the pregnant hill sent forth its contents for the doer of perfect works; in the strength of manhood he with the young (Angirases) seeking plenitude of riches attained possession, then singing the hymn of light he became at once the Angiras. Becoming in our front the form and measure of each existing thing, he knows all the births, he slays Shushna"; that is to say, the Divine Mind assumes a form answering to each existing thing in the world and reveals its true divine image and meaning and slays the false force that distorts knowledge and action. "Seeker of the cows, traveller to the seat of heaven, singing the hymns, he, the Friend, delivers his friends out of all defect (of right self-expression). With a mind that sought the Light (the cows) they entered their seats by the illumining words, making the path towards Immortality (*ni gavyatā manasā sedur arkaiḥ kṛṇvānāso amṛtatvāya gātum*). This is that large seat of theirs, the Truth by which they took possession of the months (the ten months of the Dashagwas). Harmonised in vision (or,

perfectly seeing) they rejoiced in their own (abode, Swar) milking out the milk of the ancient seed (of things). Their cry (of the Word) heated all the earth and heaven (created, that is to say, the burning clarity, *gharma*, *taptaṁ ghṛtam*, which is the yield of the solar cows); they established in that which was born a firm abiding and in the cows the heroes (that is, the battling force was established in the light of the knowledge).

"Indra, the Vritra-slayer, by those who were born (the sons of the sacrifice), by the offerings, by the hymns of illumination released upward the shining ones; the wide and delightful Cow (the cow Aditi, the vast and blissful higher consciousness) bringing for him the sweet food, the honey mixed with the *ghṛta*, yielded it as her milk. For this Father also (for Heaven) they fashioned the vast and shining abode; doers of perfect works, they had the entire vision of it. Wide-upholding by their support the Parents (Heaven and Earth) they sat in that high world and embraced all its ecstasy. When for the cleaving away (of evil and falsehood) the vast Thought holds him immediately increasing in his pervasion of earth and heaven, — then for Indra in whom are the equal and faultless words, there are all irresistible energies. He has found the great, manifold and blissful Field (the wide field of the cows, Swar); and he has sent forth together all the moving herd for his friends. Indra shining out by the human souls (the Angirases) has brought into being, together, the Sun, the Dawn, the Path and the Flame."

And in the remaining verses the same figures continue, with an intervention of the famous image of the rain which has been so much misunderstood. "The Ancient-born I make new that I may conquer. Do thou remove our many undivine hurters and set Swar for our possessing. The purifying rains are extended before us (in the shape of the waters); take us over to the state of bliss that is the other shore of them. Warring in thy chariot protect us from the foe; soon, soon make us conquerors of the Cows. The Vritra-slayer, the Master of the Cows, showed (to men) the cows; he has entered with his shining laws (or lustres) within those who are black (void of light, like the Panis); showing the truths (the cows of truth) by the Truth he has opened all his

own doors," *pra sūnṛtā diśamāna ṛtena duraś ca viśvā avṛṇod apa svāḥ*; that is to say, he opens the doors of his own world, Swar, after breaking open by his entry into our darkness (*antaḥ kṛṣṇān gāt*) the "human doors" kept closed by the Panis.

Such is this remarkable hymn, the bulk of which I have translated because it both brings into striking relief the mystic and entirely psychological character of the Vedic poetry and by so doing sets out vividly the nature of the imagery in the midst of which Sarama figures. The other references to Sarama in the Rig Veda do not add anything essential to the conception. We have a brief allusion in IV.16.8, "When thou didst tear the waters out of the hill, Sarama became manifest before thee; so do thou as our leader tear out much wealth for us, breaking the pens, hymned by the Angirases." It is the Intuition manifesting before the Divine Mind as its forerunner when there is the emergence of the waters, the streaming movements of the Truth that break out of the hill in which they were confined by Vritra (verse 7); and it is by means of the Intuition that this godhead becomes our leader to the rescue of the Light and the conquest of the much wealth hidden within in the rock behind the fortress gates of the Panis.

We find another allusion to Sarama in a hymn by Parashara Shaktya, I.72. This is one of the Suktas which most clearly reveal the sense of the Vedic imagery, like most indeed of the hymns of Parashara, a very luminous poet who loves always to throw back something more than a corner of the mystic's veil. It is brief and I shall translate it in full. "He has created, within, the seer-knowings of the eternal Disposer of things, holding in his hand many powers (powers of the divine Purushas, *naryā purūṇi*); Agni creating together all immortalities becomes the master of the (divine) riches. All the immortals, they who are not limited (by ignorance), desiring, found him in us as if the Calf (of the cow Aditi) existing everywhere; labouring, travelling to the Seat, holding the Thought they attained in the supreme seat to the shining (glory) of Agni. O Agni, when through the three years (three symbolic seasons or periods corresponding perhaps to the passage through the three mental heavens) they,

pure, had served thee, the pure one, with the *ghṛta*, they held the sacrificial names and set moving (to the supreme heaven) forms well born. They had knowledge of the vast heaven and earth and bore them forward, they the sons of Rudra, the lords of the sacrifice; the mortal awoke to vision and found Agni standing in the seat supreme. Knowing perfectly (or in harmony) they kneeled down to him; they with their wives (the female energies of the gods) bowed down to him who is worthy of obeisance; purifying themselves (or, perhaps, exceeding the limits of heaven and earth) they created their own (their proper or divine) forms, guarded in the gaze, each friend, of the Friend. In thee the gods of the sacrifice found the thrice seven secret seats hidden within; they, being of one heart, protect by them the immortality. Guard thou the herds that stand and that which moves. O Agni, having knowledge of all manifestations (or births) in the worlds (or, knowing all the knowledge of the peoples) establish thy forces, continuous, for life. Knowing, within, the paths of the journeying of the gods thou becamest their sleepless messenger and the bearer of the offerings. The seven mighty ones of heaven (the rivers) placing aright the thought, knowing the Truth, discerned the doors of the felicity; Sarama found the fastness, the wideness of the cows whereby now the human creature enjoys (the supreme riches). They who entered upon all things that bear right issue, made the path to Immortality; by the great ones and by the greatness earth stood wide; the mother Aditi with her sons came for the upholding. The Immortals planted in him the shining glory, when they made the two eyes of heaven (identical probably with the two vision-powers of the Sun, the two horses of Indra); rivers, as it were, flow down released; the shining ones (the cows) who were here below knew, O Agni."

So runs this hymn of Parashara, translated with the utmost possible literalness even at the cost of some uncouthness in the English. It is clear at the very first glance that it is throughout a hymn of knowledge, of the Truth, of a divine Flame which is hardly distinguishable from the supreme Deity, of immortality, of the ascent of the gods, the divine powers, by the sacrifice to their godhead, to their supreme names, to their proper forms, to

the shining glory of the supreme state with its thrice seven seats of the Godhead. Such an ascent can have no other meaning than the ascent of the divine powers *in man* out of their ordinary cosmic appearances to the shining Truth beyond, as indeed Parashara himself tells us that by this action of the gods mortal man awakens to the knowledge and finds Agni standing in the supreme seat and goal; *vidan marto nemadhitā cikitvān, agniṁ pade parame tasthivāṁsam*. What is Sarama doing in such a hymn if she is not a power of the Truth, if her cows are not the rays of a divine dawn of illumination? What have the cows of old warring tribes and the sanguinary squabbles of our Aryan and Dravidian ancestors over their mutual plunderings and cattle-liftings to do with this luminous apocalypse of the immortality and the godhead? Or what are these rivers that think and know the Truth and discover the hidden doors? Or must we still say that these were the rivers of the Punjab dammed up by drought or by the Dravidians and Sarama a mythological figure for an Aryan embassy or else only the physical Dawn?

One hymn in the tenth Mandala is devoted entirely to this "embassy" of Sarama, it is the colloquy of Sarama and the Panis; but it adds nothing essential to what we already know about her and its chief importance lies in the help it gives us in forming our conception of the masters of the cavern treasure. We may note, however, that neither in this hymn, nor in the others we have noticed is there the least indication of the figure of the divine hound which was attributed to Sarama in a possibly later development of the Vedic imagery. It is surely the shining fair-footed goddess by whom the Panis are attracted and whom they desire as their sister, — not as a dog to guard their cattle, but as one who will share in the possession of their riches. The image of the hound of heaven is, however, exceedingly apt and striking and was bound to develop out of the legend. In one of the earlier hymns we have mention indeed of a son for whom Sarama "got food" according to an ancient interpretation which accounts for the phrase by a story that the hound Sarama demanded food for her offspring in the sacrifice as a condition of her search for the lost cows. But this is obviously an explanatory invention

which finds no place in the Rig Veda itself. The Veda says, "In the sacrifice" or, as it more probably means, "in the seeking of Indra and the Angirases (for the cows) Sarama discovered a foundation for the Son," *vidat saramā tanayāya dhāsim* (I.62.3); for such is the more likely sense here of the word *dhāsim*. The son is in all probability the son born of the sacrifice, a constant element in the Vedic imagery and not the dog-race born of Sarama. We have similar phrases in the Veda as in I.96.4, *mātariśvā puruvārapuṣṭir vidad gātuṁ tanayāya svarvit*, "Matarishwan (the Life-god, Vayu) increasing the many desirable things (the higher objects of life) discovered the path for the Son, discovered Swar," where the subject is evidently the same but the son has nothing to do with any brood of puppies.

The two Sarameya dogs, messengers of Yama, are mentioned in a late hymn in the tenth Mandala, but without any reference to Sarama as their mother. This occurs in the famous "funeral" hymn X.14, and it is worth while noting the real character of Yama and his two dogs in the Rig Veda. In the later ideas Yama is the god of Death and has his own special world; but in the Rig Veda he seems to have been originally a form of the Sun, — even as late as the Isha Upanishad we find the name used as an appellation of the Sun, — and then one of the twin children of the wide-shining Lord of Truth. He is the guardian of the dharma, the law of the Truth, *satyadharma*, which is a condition of immortality, and therefore himself the guardian of immortality. His world is Swar, the world of immortality, *amṛte loke akṣite*, where, as we are told in IX.113, is the indestructible Light, where Swar is established, *yatra jyotir ajasraṁ, yasmin loke svar hitam*. The hymn X.14 is indeed not a hymn of Death so much as a hymn of Life and Immortality. Yama and the ancient Fathers have discovered the path to that world which is a pasture of the Cows whence the enemy cannot bear away the radiant herds, *yamo no gātuṁ prathamo viveda, naiṣā gavyūtir apabhartavā u, yatrā naḥ pūrve pitaraḥ pareyuḥ*. The soul of the heaven-ascending mortal is bidden to "outrun the two four-eyed varicoloured Sarameya dogs on the good (or effective) path." Of that path to heaven they are the four-eyed

guardians, protecting man on the road by their divine vision, *yau te śvānau yama rakṣitārau caturakṣau pathirakṣī nṛcakṣasau*, and Yama is asked to give them as an escort to the soul on its way. These dogs are "wide-moving, not easily satisfied" and range as the messengers of the Lord of the Law among men. And the hymn prays, "May they (the dogs) give us back bliss here in the unhappy (world) so that we may look upon the Sun." We are still in the order of the old Vedic ideas, the Light and the Bliss and the Immortality, and these Sarameya dogs have the essential characteristics of Sarama, the vision, the wide-ranging movement, the power to travel on the path by which the goal is reached. Sarama leads to the wideness of the cows; these dogs protect the soul on its journey to the inviolable pasture, the field (*kṣetra*) of the luminous and imperishable herds. Sarama brings us to the truth, to the sun-vision which is the way to the bliss; these dogs bring the weal to man in this world of suffering so that he shall have the vision of the Sun. Whether Sarama figures as the fair-footed goddess speeding on the path or the heavenly hound, mother of these wide-ranging guardians of the path, the idea is the same, a power of the Truth that seeks and discovers, that finds by a divine faculty of insight the hidden Light and the denied Immortality. But it is to this seeking and finding that her function is limited.

Chapter XXI

The Sons of Darkness

WE HAVE seen, not once but repeatedly, that it is impossible to read into the story of the Angirases, Indra and Sarama, the cave of the Panis and the conquest of the Dawn, the Sun and the Cows an account of a political and military struggle between Aryan invaders and Dravidian cave-dwellers. It is a struggle between the seekers of Light and the powers of Darkness; the cows are the illuminations of the Sun and the Dawn, they cannot be physical cows; the wide fear-free field of the Cows won by Indra for the Aryans is the wide world of Swar, the world of the solar Illumination, the threefold luminous regions of Heaven. Therefore equally the Panis must be taken as powers of the cave of Darkness. It is quite true that the Panis are Dasyus or Dāsas; they are spoken of constantly by that name, they are described as the Dāsa Varna as opposed to the Arya Varna, and *varṇa*, colour, is the word used for caste or class in the Brahmanas and later writings, although it does not therefore follow that it has that sense in the Rig Veda. The Dasyus are the haters of the sacred word; they are those who give not to the gods the gift or the holy wine, who keep their wealth of cows and horses and other treasure for themselves and do not give them to the seers; they are those who do not the sacrifice. We may, if we like, suppose that there was a struggle between two different cults in India and that the Rishis took their images from the physical struggle between the human representatives of these cults and applied them to the spiritual conflict, just as they employed the other details of their physical life to symbolise the spiritual sacrifice, the spiritual wealth, the spiritual battle and journey. But it is perfectly certain that in the Rig Veda at least it is the spiritual conflict and victory, not the physical battle and plunder of which they are speaking.

It is either an uncritical or a disingenuous method to take

isolated passages and give them a particular sense which will do well enough there only while ignoring the numerous other passages in which that sense is patently inapplicable. We must take as a whole all the references in the Veda to the Panis, their wealth, their characteristics, the victory of the Gods, the seers and the Aryans over them and adopt uniformly that conclusion which arises from all the passages thus taken together. When we follow this method we find that in many of these passages the idea of the Panis as human beings is absolutely impossible and that they are powers either of physical or of spiritual darkness; in others that they cannot at all be powers of physical darkness, but may well be either human enemies of the god-seekers and sacrificers or else enemies of the spiritual Light; in yet others that they cannot be either human enemies or enemies of the physical Light, but are certainly the enemies of the spiritual Light, the Truth and the Thought. From these data there can be only one conclusion, that they are always and only enemies of the spiritual Light.

We may take as the master-clue to the general character of these Dasyus the Rik V.14.4, "Agni born shone out slaying the Dasyus, the darkness by the Light; he found the Cows, the Waters, Swar," *agnir jāto arocata, ghnan dasyūn jyotiṣā tamaḥ; avindad gā apaḥ svaḥ*. There are two great divisions of the Dasyus, the Panis who intercept both the cows and the waters but are especially associated with the refusal of the cows, the Vritras who intercept the waters and the light, but are especially associated with the withholding of the waters; all Dasyus without exception stand in the way of the ascent to Swar and oppose the acquisition of the wealth by the Aryan seers. The refusal of the light is their opposition to the vision of Swar, *svardṛś*, and the vision of the sun, to the supreme vision of knowledge, *upamā ketuḥ*; the refusal of the waters is their opposition to the abundant movement of Swar, *svarvatīr apaḥ*, the movement or streamings of the Truth, *ṛtasya preṣā*, *ṛtasya dhārāḥ*; the opposition to the wealth-acquisition is their refusal of the abundant substance of Swar, *vasu*, *dhana*, *vāja*, *hiraṇya*, that great wealth which is found in the sun and in the waters, *apsu sūrye mahad dhanam*. Still since the whole struggle is between the Light and

the Darkness, the Truth and the Falsehood, the divine Maya and the undivine, all the Dasyus alike are here identified with the Darkness; and it is by the birth and shining of Agni that the Light is created with which he slays the Dasyus and the Darkness. The historical interpretation will not do at all here, though the naturalistic may pass if we isolate the passage and suppose the lighting of the sacrificial fire to be the cause of the daily sunrise; but we have to judge from a comparative study of the Veda and not on the strength of isolated passages.

The opposition between the Aryans and the Panis or Dasyus is brought out in another hymn of the fifth Mandala and in III.34 we have the expression Arya Varna. We must remember that the Dasyus have been identified with the Darkness; therefore the Aryans must be connected with the Light and we actually find that the light of the Sun is called in the Veda the Aryan Light in contradistinction evidently to the Dāsa darkness. Vasishtha also speaks of the three Aryan peoples who are *jyotiragrāḥ*, led by the light, having the light in their front (VII.33.7). The Aryan-Dasyu question can only be adequately treated by an exhaustive discussion in which all the relevant passages are scrutinised and the difficulties faced, but for my present purpose this is a sufficient starting-point. We must remember also that we have in the Veda the expressions *ṛtaṁ jyotiḥ*, *hiraṇyaṁ jyotiḥ*, the true light, the golden light, which give us an additional clue. Now these three epithets of the solar light, *ārya*, *ṛta*, *hiraṇya* are, I suggest, mutually illuminative and almost equivalent. The Sun is the Lord of Truth, therefore its light is the *ṛtaṁ jyotiḥ*; this light of truth is that which the Aryan, god or mortal, possesses, and which constitutes his Arya-hood; again the epithet golden is constantly applied to the Sun and gold is in Veda probably the symbol of the substance of the truth, for its substance is the light which is the golden wealth found in Surya and in the waters of Swar, *apsu sūrye*, — therefore we have the epithet *hiraṇyaṁ jyotiḥ*. This golden or shining light is the hue, *varṇa*, of the truth; it is also the hue of the thoughts full of that illumination won by the Aryan, the cows who are bright in colour, *śukra*, *śveta*, the colour of Light; while the Dasyu, being a power of darkness, is

black in hue. I suggest that the brightness of the light of the truth, *jyotiḥ āryam*, is the Arya *varṇa*, the hue of these Aryans who are *jyotiragrāḥ*; the darkness of the night of the ignorance is the hue of the Panis, the Dāsa *varṇa*. In this way *varṇa* would come to mean almost the nature or else all those of that particular nature, the colour being the symbol of the nature; and that this idea was a current notion among the ancient Aryans seems to me to be shown by the later use of different colours to distinguish the four castes, white, red, yellow and black.

The passage in V.34 runs as follows. "He (Indra) desires not to ascend by the five and by the ten; he cleaves not to him who gives not the Soma even though he grow and increase; he overcomes him or else he slays in his impetuous movement; he gives to the god-seeker for his enjoyment the pen full of the Cows. Cleaver (of the foe) in the battle-shock, firm holder of the discus (or the wheel), averse from him who gives not the Soma but increaser of the Soma-giver, terrible is Indra and the tamer of all; Aryan, he brings into utter subjection the Dāsa. He comes driving this enjoyment of the Pani, robbing him of it, and he apportions entirely to the giver for his enjoyment the wealth rich in hero-powers (lit. in men, *sūnaraṁ vasu*, *vīra* and *nṛ* being often used synonymously); that man who makes wroth the strength of Indra is held back manifoldly in a difficult journeying, (*durge*[1] *cana dhriyate ā puru*). When Maghavan has known in the shining cows the Two who are rich in wealth and have all forces, he growing in knowledge makes a third his helper and rushing impetuously looses upward the multitude of the cows (*gavyam*) by the help of his fighters." And the last Rik of the Sukta speaks of the Aryan (god or man) arriving at the highest knowledge-vision (*upamāṁ ketum aryaḥ*), the waters in their meeting nourishing him and his housing a strong and brilliant force of battle, *kṣatram amavat tveṣam*.

From what we already know of these symbols we can easily

[1] The Rishis pray always to the gods to make their path to the highest bliss easy of going and thornless, *suga*; *durga* is the opposite of this easy going, it is the path beset by manifold (*puru*) dangers and sufferings and difficulties.

grasp the inner sense of the hymn. Indra, the Divine Mind-Power takes their secret wealth from the powers of the Ignorance with whom he refuses to ally himself even when they are rich and prosper; he gives the imprisoned herds of the illumined Dawn to the man of the sacrifice who desires the godheads. He is himself the Aryan who brings the life of the ignorance into complete subjection to the higher life so that it yields up to it all the wealth it holds. The use of the words *ārya* and *arya* to signify the gods, not only in this but in other passages, tends to show in itself that the opposition of Arya and Dasyu is not at all a national or tribal or merely human distinction, but has a deeper significance. The fighters are certainly the seven Angirases; for they and not the Maruts, which is Sayana's interpretation of *satvabhiḥ*, are Indra's helpers in the release of the Cows. But the three persons whom Indra finds or comes to know by entering among the bright cows, by possessing the trooping illuminations of the Thought, are more difficult to fix. In all probability it is these three by whom the seven rays of the Angiras-knowledge are raised to ten so that they pass successfully through the ten months and release the sun and the cows; for it is after finding or knowing the two and getting help of the third that Indra releases the cows of the Panis. They may also be connected with the symbolism of the three Aryan peoples led by the light and the three luminous worlds of Swar; for the attainment of the supreme knowledge-vision, *upamā ketuḥ*, is the final result of their action and this supreme knowledge is that which has the vision of Swar and stands in its three luminous worlds, *rocanāni*, as we find in III.2.14, *svardṛśaṁ ketuṁ divo rocanasthām uṣarbudham*, "the knowledge-vision that sees Swar, that stands in the shining worlds, that awakes in the dawn."

In III.34 Vishwamitra gives us the expression *ārya varṇa* and at the same time the key to its psychological significance. Three verses of the hymn (8-10) run as follows: "(They hymn) the supremely desirable, the ever overcoming, the giver of strength who wins possession of Swar and the divine waters; the thinkers have joy in the wake of Indra who takes possession of the earth and the heaven. Indra wins possession of the Steeds, wins the

Sun, wins the Cow of the many enjoyments; he wins the golden enjoyment, having slain the Dasyus he fosters (or protects) the Aryan *varṇa*; Indra wins the herbs and the days, the trees and the mid-world; he pierces Vala and impels forward the speaker of the words; so he becomes the tamer of those who set against him their will in works, (*abhikratūnām*)." We have here the symbolic elements of all the wealth won by Indra for the Aryan, and it includes the Sun, the days, the earth, the heavens, the middle world, the horses, the growths of earth, herbs and trees (*vanaspatīn* in the double sense, lords of the forest and lords of enjoyment); and we have as against Vala and his Dasyus the Aryan *varṇa*.

But in the verses that precede (4-6) we have already the word *varṇa* as the hue of the Aryan thoughts, the thoughts that are true and full of light. "Indra, Swar-conquering, bringing to birth the days assailed and conquered by the desirers (the Angirases) these armies (of the Dasyus); he made to shine for man the knowledge-vision of the days (*ketum ahnām*), he found the Light for the vast enjoyment; . . . he made conscious in knowledge these thoughts for his adorer, he carried forward (beyond the obstruction of the Dasyus) this bright *varṇa* of these (thoughts), *acetayad dhiya imā jaritre, pra imaṁ varṇam atirac chukram āsām.* They set in action (or, praise) many great and perfect works of the great Indra; by his strength he crushes, in his overwhelming energy, by his workings of knowledge (*māyābhiḥ*) the crooked Dasyus."

We find here the Vedic phrase *ketum ahnām*, the knowledge-vision of the days, by which is meant the light of the Sun of Truth that leads to the vast beatitude; for the "days" are those produced through Indra's conquest of Swar for man following as we know upon his destruction of the Pani armies with the help of the Angirases and the ascent of the Sun and the shining Cows. It is for man and as powers of man that all this is done by the gods, not on their own account since they possess already; — for him that as the *Nṛ*, the divine Man or Purusha, Indra holds many strengths of that manhood, *nṛvad . . . naryā purūṇi*; him he awakes to the knowledge of these thoughts which are symbolised as the shining cows released from the Panis; and the

shining hue of these thoughts, *śukraṁ varṇam āsām*, is evidently the same as that *śukra* or *śveta* Aryan hue which is mentioned in verse 9. Indra carries forward or increases the "colour" of these thoughts beyond the opposition of the Panis, *pra varṇam atirac chukram*; in doing so he slays the Dasyus and protects or fosters and increases the Aryan "colour", *hatvī dasyūn pra āryaṁ varṇam āvat.* Moreover these Dasyus are the crooked ones, *vṛjinān*, and are conquered by Indra's works or forms of knowledge, his "*māyā*"s by which, as we are elsewhere told, he overcomes the opposing "*māyā*"s of the Dasyus, Vritra or Vala. The straight and the crooked are constantly synonymous in Veda with the truth and the falsehood. Therefore it is clear that these Pani Dasyus are crooked powers of the falsehood and ignorance who set their false knowledge, their false strength, will and works against the true knowledge, the true strength, will and works of the gods and the Aryans. The triumph of the Light is the triumph of the divine knowledge of the Truth against the darkness of this false or demoniac knowledge; that victory is the ascent of the Sun, the birth of the Days, the advent of the Dawn, the release of the herds of the shining Rays and their mounting to the world of Light.

That the cows are the thoughts of the Truth we are told clearly enough in IX.111, a hymn to Soma. "By this brilliant light he, purifying himself, breaks through all hostile powers by his self-yoked horses, as if by the self-yoked horses of the Sun. He shines, a stream of the outpressed Soma, purifying himself, luminous, the brilliant One, when he encompasses all forms (of things) with the speakers of the Rik, with the seven-mouthed speakers of the Rik (the Angiras powers). Thou, O Soma findest that wealth of the Panis; thou by the Mothers (the cows of the Panis, frequently so designed in other hymns) makest thyself bright in thy own home (Swar), by the thoughts of the Truth in thy home, *saṁ mātṛbhir marjayasi sva ā dama ṛtasya dhītibhir dame.* As if the Sāma (equal fulfilment, *samāne ūrve*, in the level wideness) of the higher world (*parāvataḥ*), is that (Swar) where the thoughts (of the Truth) take their delight. By those shining ones of the triple world (or triple elemental nature) he

holds the wide manifestation (of knowledge), shining he holds the wide manifestation." We see that these cows of the Panis by whom Soma becomes clear and bright in his own home, the home of Agni and the other gods, which we know to be the vast Truth of Swar, *ṛtaṁ bṛhat*, these shining cows who have in them the triple nature of the supreme world, *tridhātubhir aruṣībhir*, and by whom Soma holds the birth or wide manifestation of that Truth,[2] are the thoughts which realise the Truth. This Swar with its three shining worlds in whose wideness there is the equal fulfilment of the *tridhātu*, a phrase often used for the supreme triple principle forming the triune highest world, *tisraḥ parāvataḥ*, is elsewhere described as the wide and fear-free pasture in which the Cows range at will and take their delight (*raṇayanti*) and here too it is that region where the thoughts of the Truth take their delight, *yatra raṇanti dhītayaḥ*. And it is said in the next verse that the divine chariot of Soma follows, getting knowledge, the supreme direction and labours forward, having vision, by the rays, *pūrvām anu pradiśaṁ yāti cekitat, saṁ raśmibhir yatate darśato ratho daivyo darśato rathaḥ*. This supreme direction is evidently that of the divine or vast Truth; these rays are evidently the rays of the Dawn or Sun of Truth; they are the cows concealed by the Panis, the illumined thoughts, *dhiyaḥ* of the bright hue, *ṛtasya dhītayaḥ*.

All the internal evidence of the Veda wherever this image of the Panis, the Cows, the Angirases occurs establishes invariably the same conclusion. The Panis are the withholders of the thoughts of the Truth, dwellers in the darkness without knowledge (*tamo avayunam*) which Indra and the Angirases by the Word, by the Sun replace with Light to manifest in its stead the wideness of the Truth. It is not with physical weapons but with words that Indra fights the Panis (VI.39.2), *paṇīn vacobhir abhi yodhad indraḥ*. It will be enough to translate without comment

[2] *Vayaḥ*. Cf. VI.21.2-3, where it is said that Indra who has the knowledge and who upholds our words and is by the words increased in the sacrifice, *indraṁ yo vidāno girvāhasaṁ gīrbhir yajñavṛddham*, forms by the Sun into that which has manifestation of knowledge the darkness which had extended itself and in which there was no knowledge, *sa it tamo avayunaṁ tatanvat sūryeṇa vayunavac cakāra*.

the hymn in which this phrase occurs so as to show finally the nature of this symbolism. "Of this divine and rapturous seer (Soma), bearer of the sacrifice, this honeyed speaker with the illumined thought, O god, join to us, to the speaker of the word the impulsions that are led by the cows of light (*iṣo goagrāḥ*). He it was who desired the shining ones (the cows, *usrāḥ*) all about the hill, truth-yoked, yoking his car with the thoughts of the Truth, *ṛtadhītibhir ṛtayug yujānaḥ*; (then) Indra broke the unbroken hill-level of Vala, by the words he fought against the Panis. He it was (Soma) who as the Moon-Power (Indu) day and night and through the years made the lightless nights to shine out, and they held the vision of the days; he created the dawns pure in their birth. He it was becoming luminous who made full of light the lightless ones; he made the many (dawns) shine by the Truth, he went with horses yoked by the Truth, with the wheel that finds Swar, satisfying (with the wealth) the doer of works." It is always the thought, the Truth, the word that is associated with the Cows of the Panis; by the words of Indra the Divine Mind-Power those who withhold the cows are conquered; that which was dark becomes light; the chariot drawn by the horses yoked by the Truth finds (by knowledge, *svarvidā nābhinā*) the luminous vastnesses of being and consciousness and delight now concealed from our vision. "By the *brahma* Indra pierces Vala, conceals the darkness, makes Swar visible" (II.24.3), *ud gā ājad abhinad brahmaṇā valam agūhat tamo vyacakṣayat svaḥ*.

The whole Rig Veda is a triumph-chant of the powers of Light, and their ascent by the force and vision of the Truth to its possession in its source and seat where it is free from the attack of the falsehood. "By Truth the cows (illumined thoughts) enter into the Truth; labouring towards the Truth the Truth one conquers; the aggressive force of the Truth seeks the cows of Light and goes breaking through (the enemy); for Truth the two wide ones (Heaven and Earth) become multitudinous and deep, for Truth the two supreme Mothers give their yield," *ṛtena gāva ṛtam ā viveśuḥ; ṛtaṁ yemāna ṛtam id vanoti, ṛtasya śuṣmas turayā u gavyuḥ; ṛtāya pṛthvī bahule gabhīre, ṛtāya dhenū parame duhāte* (IV.23.9-10).

Chapter XXII

The Conquest over the Dasyus

THE DASYUS stand in opposition to both the Aryan gods and the Aryan seers. The Gods are born from Aditi in the supreme Truth of things, the Dasyus or Danavas from Diti in the nether darkness; they are the Lords of Light and the Lords of Night fronting each other across the triple world of earth, heaven and mid-air, body, mind and the connecting breath of life. Sarama in X.108 descends from the supreme realm, *parākāt*; she has to cross the waters of the Rasā, she meets the night which gives place to her for fear of her overleaping it, *atiṣkado bhiyasā*; she arrives at the home of the Dasyus, *dasyor oko na sadanam*, which they themselves describe as the *reku padam alakam*, the world of falsehood beyond the bound of things. The supreme world also surpasses the bound of things by exceeding or transcending it; it is *reku padam*, but *satyam* not *alakam*, the world of the Truth, not the world of the falsehood. The latter is the darkness without knowledge, *tamo avayunaṁ tatanvat*; Indra when his largeness exceeds (*ririce*) heaven and earth and mid-world creates for the Aryan the opposite world of truth and knowledge, *vayunavat*, which exceeds these three domains and is therefore *reku padam*. This darkness, this lower world of Night and the Inconscient in the formed existence of things symbolised in the image of the mountain which rises from the bowels of earth to the back of heaven, is represented by the secret cave at the base of the hill, the cave of the darkness.

But the cave is only the home of the Panis, their field of action is earth and heaven and the mid-world. They are the sons of the Inconscience, but themselves are not precisely inconscient in their action; they have forms of apparent knowledge, *māyāḥ*, but these are forms of ignorance the truth of which is concealed in the darkness of the inconscient and their surface or front is falsehood, not truth. For the world as we see it has come out

of the darkness concealed in darkness, the deep and abysmal flood that covered all things, the inconscient ocean, *apraketaṁ salilam* (X.129.3); in that non-existence the seers have found by desire in the heart and thought in the mind that which builds up the true existence. This non-existence of the truth of things, *asat*, is the first aspect of them that emerges from the inconscient ocean; and its great darkness is the Vedic Night, *rātrīṁ jagato niveśanīm* (I.35.1), which holds the world and all its unrevealed potentialities in her obscure bosom. Night extends her realm over this triple world of ours and out of her in heaven, in the mental being, Dawn is born who delivers the Sun out of the darkness where it was lying concealed and eclipsed and creates the vision of the supreme Day in the non-existence, in the Night, *asati ketum*. It is therefore in these three realms that the battle between the Lords of Light and the Lords of the Ignorance proceeds through its continual vicissitudes.

The word *paṇi* means dealer, trafficker, from *paṇ* (also *pan*,[1] cf. Tamil *paṇ*, Greek *ponos*, labour) and we may perhaps regard the Panis as the powers that preside over those ordinary unillumined sense-activities of life whose immediate root is in the dark subconscient physical being and not in the divine mind. The whole struggle of man is to replace this action by the luminous working of mind and life which comes from above through the mental existence. Whoever thus aspires, labours, battles, travels, ascends the hill of being is the Aryan (*ārya*, *arya*, *ari* with the various senses, to toil, to fight, to climb or rise, to travel, to prepare the sacrifice); for the work of the Aryan is a sacrifice which is at once a battle and an ascent and a journey, a battle against the powers of darkness, an ascent to the highest peaks of the mountain beyond earth and heaven into Swar, a journey to the other shore of the rivers and the ocean into the farthest Infinity of things. The Aryan has the will to the work, he is the doer of the work (*kāru*, *kīri*, etc.), the gods who put their force

[1] Sayana takes *pan* in Veda — to praise, but in one place he admits the sense of *vyavahāra*, dealing. Action seems to me to be its sense in most passages. From *paṇ* in the sense of action we have the earlier names of the organs of action, *pāṇi*, hand, foot or hoof, Lat. *penis*, cf. also *pāyu*.

into his work are *sukratu*, perfect in power for the sacrifice; the Dasyu or Pani is the opposite of both, he is *akratu*. The Aryan is the sacrificer, *yajamāna*, *yajyu*; the gods who receive, uphold, impel his sacrifice are *yajata*, *yajatra*, powers of the sacrifice; the Dasyu is the opposite of both, he is *ayajyu*. The Aryan in the sacrifice finds the divine word, *gīḥ*, *mantra*, *brahma*, *uktha*, he is the *brahmā* or singer of the word; the gods delight in and uphold the word, *girvāhas*, *girvaṇas*, the Dasyus are haters and destroyers of the Word, *brahmadviṣaḥ*, spoilers of speech, *mṛdhravācaḥ*. They have no force of the divine breath or no mouth to speak it, they are *anāsaḥ*; and they have no power to think and mentalise the word and the truth it contains, they are *amanyamānāḥ*: but the Aryans are the thinkers of the word, *manyamānāḥ*, holders of the thought, the thought-mind and the seer-knowledge, *dhīra*, *manīṣī*, *kavi*; the gods are also the supreme thinkers of the Thought, *prathamo manotā dhiyaḥ*, *kavayaḥ*. The Aryans are desirers of the godheads, *devayu*, *uśij*; they seek to increase their own being and the godheads in them by the sacrifice, the word, the thought; the Dasyus are god-haters, *devadviṣaḥ*, obstructors of the godhead, *devanidaḥ*, who desire no increase, *avṛdhaḥ*. The gods lavish wealth on the Aryan, the Aryan gives his wealth to the gods; the Dasyu withholds his wealth from the Aryan until it is taken from him by force, and does not press out the immortal Soma wine for the deities who seek its rapture in man; although he is *revān*, although his cave is packed with cows and horses and treasures, *gobhir aśvebhir vasubhir nyṛṣṭam*, still he is *arādhas*, because his wealth gives no prosperity or felicity to man or himself, — the Pani is the miser of existence. And in the struggle between the Aryan and the Dasyu he seeks always to plunder and destroy, to steal the luminous cows of the latter and hide them again in the darkness of the cave. "Slay the devourer, the Pani; for he is the wolf (the tearer, *vṛkaḥ*)" (VI.51.14).

It is evident that these descriptions could easily be applied to human enemies who hate the cult and the gods of the Aryan, but we shall see that such an interpretation is entirely impossible because in the hymn I.33 in which these distinctions are most clearly drawn and the battle of Indra and his human allies with

the Dasyus most elaborately described, these Dasyus, Panis and Vritras, cannot possibly be human fighters, tribes or robbers. In this hymn of Hiranyastupa Angirasa the first ten verses clearly refer to the battle for the Cows and therefore to the Panis. "Come, let us go seeking the cows to Indra; for it is he that increases the thought in us; invincible is he and complete are his felicities, he releases for us (separates from the darkness) the supreme knowledge-vision of the luminous cows, *gavāṁ ketaṁ param āvarjate naḥ*. I fly to the unassailable giver of riches like a bird to its beloved nest, bowing down to Indra with the supreme words of light, to him to whom his affirmers must call in their journey. He comes with all his armies and has fastened firmly his quivers; he is the fighter (the Aryan) who brings the cows to whomsoever he desires. O Indra who hast increased (by our word), hold not back for thyself thy much delight, become not in us the Pani, *coṣkūyamāṇo bhūri vāmaṁ mā paṇir bhūr asmad adhi pravṛddha*." The last phrase is a striking one and in the current interpretation its real force is avoided by rendering "do not become a miser with regard to us." But this is to ignore the fact that the Panis are the withholders of the wealth who keep it for themselves and give it neither to god nor man. The sense obviously is "Having thy much wealth of the delight, do not be a Pani, one who holds his possessions only for himself and keeps them from man; do not hold the delight away from us in thy superconscient as the Panis do in their subconscient secrecy."

Then the hymn describes the Pani, the Dasyu and Indra's battle with him for the possession of earth and heaven. "Nay, thou slayest with thy weapon the wealthy Dasyu, ranging alone with thy powers that serve thee, O Indra; they on thy bow (the powers as arrows) sped diversely in all directions and they who keep possession and sacrifice not went unto their death. Their heads were scattered far from them, they who do not sacrifice yet strove with the sacrificers, when, O lord of the shining steeds, O strong stander in heaven, thou didst cast out from Heaven and Earth those who observe not the law of thy working (*avratān*). They fought against the army of the blameless one; the Navagwas set him on his march; like bullocks who fight against the

bull they were cast out, they came to know what was Indra and fled from him down the slopes. O Indra, thou foughtest them who laughed and wept on the other side of the mid-world (*rajasaḥ pāre*, i.e. on the borders of heaven); thou didst burn down the Dasyu out of heaven from on high, thou didst foster the expression of him who affirms thee and gives the Soma. Making the circle of the earth, they shone in the light of the golden gem (an image for the Sun); but for all their rushing they could not pass beyond Indra, for he set spies all around by the Sun. When thou possessedst earth and heaven all around with thy vastness, O Indra, by the speakers of the word (*brahmabhir*) thou didst cast out the Dasyu, attacking those who can think not (the Truth) by those who think, *amanyamānān abhi manyamānaiḥ*. They attained not to the end of heaven and earth; Indra, the bull, made the lightning his helper, by the Light he milked the shining cows out of the darkness."

The battle takes place not on earth but on the other shore of the Antariksha, the Dasyus are driven out of heaven by the flames of the thunderbolt, they circle round the earth and are cast out of both heaven and earth; for they can find no place in either heaven or earth, all being now full of the greatness of Indra, nor can conceal themselves anywhere from his lightnings because the Sun with its rays gives him spies whom he sets all round and in the brightness of those rays the Panis are discovered. This can be no description of an earthly battle between Aryan and Dravidian tribes; neither can the lightning be the physical lightning since that has nothing to do with the destruction of the powers of Night and the milking of the cows of the Dawn out of the darkness. It is clear then that these non-sacrificers, these haters of the word who are incompetent even to think it are not any human enemies of the Aryan cult. They are the powers that strive for possession of heaven and earth in man himself; they are demons and not Dravidians.

It is noteworthy that they strive, but fail to attain the "limit of earth and heaven"; we may suppose that these powers seek without the word or the sacrifice to attain to the higher world beyond earth and heaven which can be conquered only by the

word and the sacrifice. They seek to possess the Truth under the law of the Ignorance; but they are unable to attain to the limit of earth or heaven; only Indra and the Gods can so exceed the formula of mind, life and body after filling all three with their greatness. Sarama (X.108.6) seems to hint at this ambition of the Panis; "May your words be unable to attain, may your embodiments be evil and inauspicious; may you not violate the path to travel upon it; may Brihaspati not give you happiness of the two worlds (divine and human)." The Panis indeed offer insolently to be friendly with Indra if he will stay in their cave and be the keeper of their cows, to which Sarama answers that Indra is the overcomer of all and cannot be himself overcome and oppressed, and again they offer brotherhood to Sarama if she will dwell with them and not return to the far world whence she has come by the force of the gods against all obstacles, *prabādhitā sahasā daivyena*. Sarama replies, "I know not brotherhood and sisterhood, Indra knows and the dread Angirases; desiring the Cows they protected me so that I came; depart hence, O Panis, to a better place. Depart hence, O Panis, to a better place, let the Cows ye confine go upward by the Truth, the hidden Cows whom Brihaspati finds and Soma and the pressing-stones and the illumined seers."

We have the idea also of a voluntary yielding up of their store by the Panis in VI.53, a hymn addressed to the Sun as the Increaser Pushan. "O Pushan, Lord of the Path, we yoke thee like a chariot for the winning of the plenitude, for the Thought. . . . O shining Pushan, impel to giving the Pani, even him who giveth not; soften the mind even of the Pani. Distinguish the paths that lead to the winning of the plenitude, slay the aggressors, let our thoughts be perfected. Smite the hearts of the Panis with thy goad, O seer; so make them subject to us. Smite them, O Pushan, with thy goad and desire in the heart of the Pani our delight; so make him subject to us. . . . Thy goad thou bearest that impels the word to rise, O shining seer, with that write thy line on the hearts of all and sever them, (so make them subject to us). Thy goad of which thy ray is the point and which perfects the herds (of

thought-vision, *paśusādhanī*, cf. *sādhantāṁ dhiyaḥ* in verse 4), the delight of that we desire. Create for us the thought that wins the cow, that wins the horse, that wins the plenitude of the wealth."

If we are right in our interpretation of this symbol of the Panis, these ideas are sufficiently intelligible without depriving the word of its ordinary sense, as does Sayana, and making it mean only a miserly, greedy human being whom the hunger-stricken poet is thus piteously importuning the Sun-God to turn to softness and charity. The Vedic idea was that the subconscient darkness and the ordinary life of ignorance held concealed in it all that belongs to the divine life and that these secret riches must be recovered first by destroying the impenitent powers of ignorance and then by possessing the lower life subjected to the higher. Of Indra it has been said, as we have seen, that he either slays or conquers the Dasyu and transfers his wealth to the Aryan. So also Sarama refuses peace with alliance to the Panis, but suggests their submission to the gods and the Aryans by the surrender and ascent of the imprisoned cows and their own departure from the darkness to a better place (*ā varīyaḥ*). And it is by the strenuous touch of the goad of the luminous seer, Pushan, lord of the Truth, the goad that drives open the closed heart and makes the sacred word to arise from its depths, it is by this luminous-pointed goad which perfects the radiant cows, accomplishes the luminous thoughts, that the conversion of the Pani is effected; then the Truth-god in his darkened heart also desires that which the Aryan desires. Therefore by this penetrating action of the Light and the Truth the powers of the ordinary ignorant sense-activity become subject to the Aryan.

But, normally, they are his enemies, not *dāsa* in the sense of submission and service (*dāsa*, servant, from *das* to work), but in the sense of destruction and injury (*dāsa*, *dasyu*, an enemy, plunderer, from *das* to divide, hurt, injure). The Pani is the robber who snatches away the cows of light, the horses of the swiftness and the treasures of the divine plenitude, he is the wolf, the eater, *atri*, *vṛka*; he is the obstructor, *nid*, and spoiler of the word. He is the enemy, the thief, the false or evil thinker who

makes difficult the Path by his robberies and obstructions; "Cast away utterly far from us the enemy, the thief, the crooked one who places falsely the thought; O master of existence, make our path easy to travel. Slay the Pani for he is the wolf, that devours" (VI.51.13-14). His rising to the attack must be checked by the gods. "This god (Soma) in his birth with Indra for helper held back by force the Pani" and won Swar and the sun and all the riches, (VI.44.22). The Panis have to be slain or routed so that their riches may be ravished from them and devoted to the higher life. "Thou who didst sever the Pani in his continuous ranks, thine are these strong givings, O Saraswati. O Saraswati, crush the obstructors of the gods" (VI.61). "O Agni and Soma, then was your strength awakened when you robbed the Pani of the cows and found the one Light for many" (I.93.4).

When the gods awake in the Dawn for the sacrifice, the Panis must not awake also to interfere with its successful progress; let them sleep in their cavern darkness. "O Dawn, queen of the plenitudes, awaken those who fill us (the gods), but let the Panis sleep unawakening. Richly dawn for the lords of the plenitude, O queen of the Plenitude, richly for him who affirms thee, O Dawn that art Truth. Young she shines out before us, she has created her host of the ruddy cows; in the non-existent vision has dawned out wide" (I.124.10-11). Or again in IV.51, "Lo, in front of us that supreme light full of the knowledge has arisen out of the darkness; daughters of heaven shining wide, the Dawns have created the path for the human being. The Dawns stand in front of us like pillars in the sacrifices; breaking out pure and purifying they have opened the doors of the pen, the darkness. Breaking forth today the dawns awaken to knowledge the enjoyers for the giving of the rich felicity; within where there is no play of light let the Panis sleep unwaking in the heart of the darkness." Into this nether darkness they have to be cast down from the higher planes while the Dawns imprisoned by them in that night have to be lifted to the highest planes. "Panis who make the knot of the crookedness, who have not the will to works, spoilers of speech, who have not faith, who increase not, who do not sacrifice, them has Agni driven farther and farther; supreme, he has made them

nethermost who will not sacrifice. And (the Cows, the Dawns) who rejoiced in the nether darkness, by his power he has made to move to the highest. . . . He has broken down by his blows the walls that limit, he has given the Dawns to be possessed by the Aryan," *aryapatnīr uṣasaś cakāra* (VII.6.3-5). The Rivers and Dawns when in the possession of Vritra or Vala are described as *dāsapatnīḥ*; by the action of the gods they become *aryapatnīḥ*, they become the helpmates of the Aryan.

The lords of the ignorance have to be slain or enslaved to the Truth and its seekers, but their wealth is indispensable to the human fulfilment; it is as if "on the most wealth-abounding head of the Panis" (VI.45.31) that Indra takes his stand, *paṇīnāṁ varṣiṣṭhe mūrdhann asthāt*; he becomes himself the Cow of Light and the Horse of Swiftness and lavishes an ever-increasing thousandfold wealth. The fullness of that luminous wealth of the Panis and its ascent heavenward is, as we know already, the Path and the birth of the Immortality. "The Angiras held the supreme manifestation (of the Truth), they who had lit the fire, by perfect accomplishment of the work; they gained the whole enjoyment of the Pani, its herds of the cows and the horses. Atharvan first formed the Path, thereafter Surya was born as the protector of the Law and the Blissful One, *tataḥ sūryo vratapā vena ājani*. Ushanas Kavya drove upward the Cows. With them may we win by the sacrifice the immortality that is born as a child to the Lord of the Law," *yamasya jātam amṛtaṁ yajāmahe* (I.83.4-5). Angira is the Rishi who represents the Seer-Will, Atharvan is the Rishi of the journeying on the Path, Ushanas Kavya is the Rishi of the heavenward desire that is born from the seer-knowledge. The Angiras win the wealth of illuminations and powers of the Truth concealed behind the lower life and its crookednesses; Atharvan forms in their strength the Path and Surya the Lord of Light is then born as the guardian of the divine Law and the Yama-power; Ushanas drives the herded illuminations of our thought up that path of the Truth to the Bliss which Surya possesses; so is born from the law of the Truth the immortality to which the Aryan soul by its sacrifice aspires.

Chapter XXIII

Summary of Conclusions

WE HAVE now closely scrutinised the Angiras legend in the Rig Veda from all possible sides and in all its main symbols and are in a position to summarise firmly the conclusions we have drawn from it. As I have already said, the Angiras legend and the Vritra mythus are the two principal parables of the Veda; they occur and recur everywhere; they run through the hymns as two closely connected threads of symbolic imagery, and around them all the rest of the Vedic symbolism is woven. Not that they are its central ideas, but they are two main pillars of this ancient structure. When we determine their sense, we have determined the sense of the whole Rik Sanhita. If Vritra and the waters symbolise the cloud and the rain and the gushing forth of the seven rivers of the Punjab and if the Angirases are the bringers of the physical dawn, then the Veda is a symbolism of natural phenomena personified in the figure of gods and Rishis and maleficent demons. If Vritra and Vala are Dravidian gods and the Panis and Vritras human enemies, then the Veda is a poetical and legendary account of the invasion of Dravidian India by Nature-worshipping barbarians. If on the other hand this is a symbolism of the struggle between spiritual powers of Light and Darkness, Truth and Falsehood, Knowledge and Ignorance, Death and Immortality, then that is the real sense of the whole Veda.

We have concluded that the Angiras Rishis are bringers of the Dawn, rescuers of the Sun out of the darkness, but that this Dawn, Sun, Darkness are figures used with a spiritual significance. The central conception of the Veda is the conquest of the Truth out of the darkness of Ignorance and by the conquest of the Truth the conquest also of Immortality. For the Vedic Ritam is a spiritual as well as a psychological conception. It is the true being, the true consciousness, the true delight of

existence beyond this earth of body, this mid-region of vital force, this ordinary sky or heaven of mind. We have to cross beyond all these planes in order to arrive at the higher plane of that superconscient Truth which is the own home of the gods and the foundation of Immortality. This is the world of Swar, to which the Angirases have found the path for their posterity.

The Angirases are at once the divine seers who assist in the cosmic and human workings of the gods and their earthly representatives, the ancient fathers who first found the wisdom of which the Vedic hymns are a chant and memory and renewal in experience. The seven divine Angirases are sons or powers of Agni, powers of the Seer-Will, the flame of divine Force instinct with divine knowledge which is kindled for the victory. The Bhrigus have found this Flame secret in the growths of the earthly existence, but the Angirases kindle it on the altar of sacrifice and maintain the sacrifice through the periods of the sacrificial year symbolising the periods of the divine labour by which the Sun of Truth is recovered out of the darkness. Those who sacrifice for nine months of this year are Navagwas, seers of the nine cows or nine rays, who institute the search for the herds of the Sun and the march of Indra to battle with the Panis. Those who sacrifice for ten months are the Dashagwas, seers of the ten rays who enter with Indra into the cave of the Panis and recover the lost herds.

The sacrifice is the giving by man of what he possesses in his being to the higher or divine nature and its fruit is the farther enrichment of his manhood by the lavish bounty of the gods. The wealth thus gained constitutes a state of spiritual riches, prosperity, felicity which is itself a power for the journey and a force of battle. For the sacrifice is a journey, a progression; the sacrifice itself travels led by Agni up the divine path to the gods and of this journey the ascent of the Angiras fathers to the divine world of Swar is the type. Their journey of the sacrifice is also a battle, for it is opposed by Panis, Vritras and other powers of evil and falsehood, and of this warfare the conflict of Indra and the Angirases with the Panis is a principal episode.

The principal features of sacrifice are the kindling of the divine flame, the offering of the *ghṛta* and the Soma wine and the chanting of the sacred word. By the hymn and the offering the gods are increased; they are said to be born, created or manifested in man and by their increase and greatness here they increase the earth and heaven, that is to say, the physical and mental existence to their utmost capacity and, exceeding these, create in their turn the higher worlds or planes. The higher existence is the divine, the infinite of which the shining Cow, the infinite Mother, Aditi, is the symbol; the lower is subject to her dark form Diti. The object of the sacrifice is to win the higher or divine being and possess with it and make subject to its law and truth the lower or human existence. The *ghṛta* of the sacrifice is the yield of the shining Cow; it is the clarity or brightness of the solar light in the human mentality. The Soma is the immortal delight of existence secret in the waters and the plant and pressed out for drinking by gods and men. The word is the inspired speech expressing the thought-illumination of the Truth which rises out of the soul, formed in the heart, shaped by the mind. Agni growing by the *ghṛta*, Indra forceful with the luminous strength and joy of the Soma and increased by the Word, aid the Angirases to recover the herds of the Sun.

Brihaspati is the Master of the creative Word. If Agni is the supreme Angiras, the flame from whom the Angirases are born, Brihaspati is the one Angiras with the seven mouths, the seven rays of the illuminative thought and the seven words which express it, of whom these seers are the powers of utterance. It is the complete thought of the Truth, the seven-headed, which wins the fourth or divine world for man by winning for him the complete spiritual wealth, object of the sacrifice. Therefore Agni, Indra, Brihaspati, Soma are all described as winners of the herds of the Sun and destroyers of the Dasyus who conceal and withhold them from man. Saraswati, who is the stream of the Word or inspiration of the Truth, is also a Dasyu-slayer and winner of the shining herds; and they are discovered by Sarama, forerunner of Indra, who is a solar or dawn goddess and seems to symbolise the intuitive power of the Truth. Usha, the Dawn,

is at once herself a worker in the great victory and in her full advent its luminous result.

Usha is the divine Dawn, for the Sun that arises by her coming is the Sun of the superconscient Truth; the day he brings is the day of the true life in the true knowledge, the night he dispels is the night of the ignorance which yet conceals the dawn in its bosom. Usha herself is the Truth, *sūnṛtā*, and the mother of Truths. These truths of the divine Dawn are called her cows, her shining herds; while the forces of the Truth that accompany them and occupy the Life are called her horses. Around this symbol of the cows and horses much of the Vedic symbolism turns; for these are the chief elements of the riches sought by man from the gods. The cows of the Dawn have been stolen and concealed by the demons, the lords of darkness in their nether cave of the secret subconscient. They are the illuminations of knowledge, the thoughts of the Truth, *gāvo matayaḥ*, which have to be delivered out of their imprisonment. Their release is the upsurging of the powers of the divine Dawn.

It is also the recovery of the Sun that was lying in the darkness; for it is said that the Sun, "that Truth", was the thing found by Indra and the Angirases in the cave of the Panis. By the rending of that cave the herds of the divine dawn which are the rays of the Sun of Truth ascend the hill of being and the Sun itself ascends to the luminous upper ocean of the divine existence, led over it by the thinkers like a ship over the waters, till it reaches its farther shore.

The Panis who conceal the herds, the masters of the nether cavern, are a class of Dasyus who are in the Vedic symbolism set in opposition to the Aryan gods and Aryan seers and workers. The Aryan is he who does the work of sacrifice, finds the sacred word of illumination, desires the Gods and increases them and is increased by them into the largeness of the true existence; he is the warrior of the light and the traveller to the Truth. The Dasyu is the undivine being who does no sacrifice, amasses a wealth he cannot rightly use because he cannot speak the word or mentalise the superconscient Truth, hates the Word, the gods and the sacrifice and gives nothing of himself to the higher

existences but robs and withholds his wealth from the Aryan. He is the thief, the enemy, the wolf, the devourer, the divider, the obstructor, the confiner. The Dasyus are powers of darkness and ignorance who oppose the seeker of truth and immortality. The gods are the powers of Light, the children of Infinity, forms and personalities of the one Godhead who by their help and by their growth and human workings in man raise him to the truth and the immortality.

Thus the interpretation of the Angiras myth gives us the key to the whole secret of the Veda. For if the cows and horses lost by the Aryans and recovered for them by the gods, the cows and horses of which Indra is the lord and giver and indeed himself the Cow and Horse, are not physical cattle, if these elements of the wealth sought by the sacrifice are symbols of a spiritual riches, so also must be its other elements which are always associated with them, sons, men, gold, treasure, etc. If the Cow of which the *ghṛta* is the yield is not a physical cow but the shining Mother, then the *ghṛta* itself which is found in the waters and is said to be triply secreted by the Panis in the Cow, is no physical offering, nor the honey-wine of Soma either which is also said to exist in the rivers and to rise in a honeyed wave from the ocean and to flow streaming up to the gods. And if these, then also the other offerings of the sacrifice must be symbolic; the outer sacrifice itself can be nothing but the symbol of an inner giving. And if the Angiras Rishis are also in part symbolic or are, like the gods, semi-divine workers and helpers in the sacrifice, so also must be the Bhrigus, Atharvans, Ushana and Kutsa and others who are associated with them in their work. If the Angiras legend and the story of the struggle with the Dasyus is a parable, so also should be the other legendary stories we find in the Rig Veda of the help given by the Gods to the Rishis against the demons; for these also are related in similar terms and constantly classed by the Vedic poets along with the Angiras story as on the same footing.

Similarly if these Dasyus who refuse the gift and the sacrifice, and hate the Word and the gods and with whom the Aryans are constantly at war, these Vritras, Panis and others, are not human

enemies but powers of darkness, falsehood and evil, then the whole idea of the Aryan wars and kings and nations begins to take upon itself the aspect of spiritual symbol and apologue. Whether they are entirely so or only partly, cannot be decided except by a more detailed examination which is not our present object. Our object is only to see whether there is a prima facie case for the idea with which we started that the Vedic hymns are the symbolic gospel of the ancient Indian mystics and their sense spiritual and psychological. Such a prima facie case we have established; for there is already sufficient ground for seriously approaching the Veda from this standpoint and interpreting it in detail as such a lyric symbolism.

Still, to make our case entirely firm it will be well to examine the other companion legend of Vritra and the waters which we have seen to be closely connected with that of the Angirases and the Light. In the first place Indra the Vritra-slayer is along with Agni one of the two chief gods of the Vedic Pantheon and if his character and functions can be properly established, we shall have the general type of the Aryan gods fixed firmly. Secondly, the Maruts, his companions, singers of the sacred chant, are the strongest point of the naturalistic theory of Vedic worship; they are undoubtedly storm-gods and no other of the greater Vedic deities, Agni or the Ashwins or Varuna and Mitra or Twashtri and the goddesses or even Surya the Sun or Usha the Dawn have such a pronounced physical character. If then these storm-gods can be shown to have a psychological character and symbolism, then there can be no farther doubt about the profounder sense of the Vedic religion and ritual. Finally, if Vritra and his associated demons, Shushna, Namuchi and the rest appear when closely scrutinised to be Dasyus in the spiritual sense and if the meaning of the heavenly waters he obstructs be more thoroughly investigated, then the consideration of the stories of the Rishis and the gods and demons as parables can be proceeded with from a sure starting-point and the symbolism of the Vedic worlds brought nearer to a satisfactory interpretation.

More we cannot at present attempt; for the Vedic symbolism as worked out in the hymns is too complex in its details, too

numerous in its standpoints, presents too many obscurities and difficulties to the interpreter in its shades and side allusions and above all has been too much obscured by ages of oblivion and misunderstanding to be adequately dealt with in a single work. We can only at present seek out the leading clues and lay as securely as may be the right foundations.

Part Two

Selected Hymns

Author's Note

These translations are offered here only in their results for the interest of the general reader and as an illustration of the theory advanced. Their philological and critical justification would be interesting only to a limited circle. A few indications, however, may at a later stage be given which will illustrate the method.

I

The Colloquy of Indra and Agastya

Rig Veda I.170

न नूनमस्ति नो श्वः कस्तद्वेद यदद्भुतम् ।
अन्यस्य चित्तमभि संचरेण्यमुताधीतं वि नश्यति ॥ १॥

Indra

1. It is not now, nor is It tomorrow; who knoweth that which is Supreme and Wonderful? It has motion and action in the consciousness of another, but when It is approached by the thought, It vanishes.

किं न इन्द्र जिघांससि भ्रातरो मरुतस्तव ।
तेभिः कल्पस्व साधुया मा नः समरणे वधीः ॥ २॥

Agastya

2. Why dost thou seek to smite us, O Indra? The Maruts are thy brothers. By them accomplish perfection; slay us not in our struggle.

किं नो भ्रातरगस्त्य सखा सन्नति मन्यसे ।
विद्मा हि ते यथा मनोऽस्मभ्यमिन्न दित्ससि ॥ ३॥
अरं कृण्वन्तु वेदिं समग्निमिन्धतां पुरः ।
तत्रामृतस्य चेतनं यज्ञं ते तनवावहै ॥ ४॥

Indra

3. Why, O my brother Agastya, art thou my friend, yet settest thy thought beyond me? For well do I know how to us thou willest not to give thy mind.

4. Let them make ready the altar, let them set Agni in blaze in front. It is there, the awakening of the consciousness to Immortality. Let us two extend for thee thy effective sacrifice.

त्वमीशिषे वसुपते वसूनां त्वं मित्राणां मित्रपते धेष्ठः ।
इन्द्र त्वं मरुद्भिः सं वदस्वाध प्राशान ऋतुथा हवींषि ॥ ५ ॥

Agastya

5. O Lord of substance over all substances of being, thou art the master in force! O Lord of Love over the powers of love, thou art the strongest to hold in status! Do thou, O Indra, agree with the Maruts, then enjoy the offerings in the ordered method of the Truth.

COMMENTARY

The governing idea of the hymn belongs to a stage of spiritual progress when the human soul wishes by the sheer force of Thought to hasten forward beyond in order to reach prematurely the source of all things without full development of the being in all its progressive stages of conscious activity. The effort is opposed by the Gods who preside over the universe of man and of the world and a violent struggle takes place in the human consciousness between the individual soul in its egoistic eagerness and the universal Powers which seek to fulfil the divine purpose of the Cosmos.

The seer Agastya at such a moment confronts in his inner experience Indra, Lord of Swar, the realm of pure intelligence, through which the ascending soul passes into the divine Truth.

Indra speaks first of that unknowable Source of things towards which Agastya is too impatiently striving. That is not to be found in Time. It does not exist in the actualities of the present, nor in the eventualities of the future. It neither is now nor becomes hereafter. Its being is beyond Space and Time and therefore in Itself cannot be known by that which is in Space

and Time. It manifests Itself by Its forms and activities in the consciousness of that which is not Itself and through those activities it is meant that It should be realised. But if one tries to approach It and study It in Itself, It disappears from the thought that would seize It and is as if It were not.

Agastya still does not understand why he is so violently opposed in a pursuit which is the eventual aim of all being and which all his thoughts and feelings demand. The Maruts are the powers of Thought which by the strong and apparently destructive motion of their progress break down that which is established and help to the attainment of new formations. Indra, the Power of pure Intelligence, is their brother, kin to them in his nature although elder in being. He should by their means effect the perfection towards which Agastya is striving and not turn enemy nor slay his friend in this terrible struggle towards the goal.

Indra replies that Agastya is his friend and brother, — brother in the soul as children of one Supreme Being, friend as comrades in a common effort and one in the divine love that unites God and man, — and by this friendship and alliance has attained to the present stage in his progressive perfection; but now he treats Indra as an inferior Power and wishes to go beyond without fulfilling himself in the domain of the God. He seeks to divert his increased thought-powers towards his own object instead of delivering them up to the universal Intelligence so that it may enrich its realisations in humanity through Agastya and lead him forward by the way of the Truth. Let the egoistic endeavour cease, the great sacrifice be resumed, the flame of the divine Force, Agni, be kindled in front as head of the sacrifice and leader of the march. Indra and Agastya together, the universal Power and the human soul, will extend in harmony the effective inner action on the plane of the pure Intelligence so that it may enrich itself there and attain beyond. For it is precisely by the progressive surrender of the lower being to the divine activities that the limited and egoistic consciousness of the mortal awakens to the infinite and immortal state which is its goal.

Agastya accepts the will of the God and submits. He agrees to perceive and fulfil the Supreme in the activities of Indra. From his own realm Indra is supreme lord over the substances of being as manifested through the triple world of mind, life and body and has therefore power to dispose of its formations towards the fulfilment, in the movement of Nature, of the divine Truth that expresses itself in the universe, — supreme lord over love and delight manifested in the same triple world and has therefore power to fix those formations harmoniously in the status of Nature. Agastya gives up all that is realised in him into the hands of Indra, as offerings of the sacrifice, to be held by him in the fixed parts of Agastya's consciousness and directed in the motional towards fresh formations. Indra is once more to enter into friendly parley with the upward aspiring powers of Agastya's being and to establish agreement between the seer's thoughts and the illumination that comes to us through the pure Intelligence. That power will then enjoy in Agastya the offerings of the sacrifice according to the right order of things as formulated and governed by the Truth which is beyond.

II

Indra, Giver of Light

Rig Veda I.4

सुरूपकृत्नुमूतये सुदुघामिव गोदुहे ।
जुहूमसि द्यविद्यवि ॥ १॥

1. The fashioner of perfect forms, like a good yielder for the milker of the Herds, we call for increase from day to day.

उप नः सवना गहि सोमस्य सोमपाः पिब ।
गोदा इद् रेवतो मदः ॥ २॥

2. Come to our Soma-offerings. O Soma-drinker, drink of the Soma-wine; the intoxication of thy rapture gives indeed the Light.

अथा ते अन्तमानां विद्याम सुमतीनाम् ।
मा नो अति ख्य आ गहि ॥ ३॥

3. Then may we know somewhat of thy uttermost right thinkings. Show not beyond us, come.

परेहि विग्रमस्तृतमिन्द्रं पृच्छा विपश्चितम् ।
यस्ते सखिभ्य आ वरम् ॥ ४॥

4. Come over, question Indra of the clear-seeing mind, the vigorous, the unoverthrown, who to thy comrades has brought the highest good.

उत ब्रुवन्तु नो निदो निरन्यतश्चिदारत ।
दधाना इन्द्र इद् दुवः ॥ ५॥

5. And may the Restrainers[1] say to us, "Nay, forth and strive on even in other fields, reposing on Indra your activity."

उत नः सुभगाँ अरिर्वोचेयुर्दस्म कृष्टयः ।
स्यामेदिन्द्रस्य शर्मणि ॥ ६ ॥

6. And may the fighters, doers of the work,[2] declare us entirely blessed, O achiever; may we abide in Indra's peace.

एमाशुमाशवे भर यज्ञश्रियं नृमादनम् ।
पतयन् मन्दयत्सखम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. Intense for the intense bring thou this glory of the sacrifice that intoxicates the Man, carrying forward on the way Indra who gives joy to his friend.

अस्य पीत्वा शतक्रतो घनो वृत्राणामभवः ।
प्रावो वाजेषु वाजिनम् ॥ ८ ॥

8. When thou hadst drunk of this, O thou of the hundred activities, thou becamest a slayer of the Coverers and protectedst the rich mind in its riches.

तं त्वा वाजेषु वाजिनं वाजयामः शतक्रतो ।
धनानामिन्द्र सातये ॥ ९ ॥

[1] Or Censurers, *Nidaḥ*. The root *nid* bears, I think, in the Veda the sense of "bondage", "confinement", "limitation", which can be assigned to it with entire certainty by philological deduction. It is the base of *nidita*, bound, and *nidāna*, tether. But the root also means to blame. After the peculiar method of the esoteric diction one or other sense predominates in different passages without entirely excluding the other.

[2] *Ariḥ kṛṣṭayaḥ* may also be translated, "the Aryan people", or "the warlike nations". The words *kṛṣṭi* and *carṣaṇi*, interpreted by Sayana as "man", have as their base the roots *kṛṣ* and *carṣ* which originally imply labour, effort or laborious action. They mean sometimes the doer of Vedic Karma, sometimes, the Karma itself, — the worker or the works.

9. Thee thus rich in thy riches we enrich again, O Indra, O thou of the hundred activities, for the safe enjoyment of our havings.

यो रायोऽवनिर्महान्त्सुपारः सुन्वतः सखा ।
तस्मा इन्द्राय गायत ॥१०॥

10. He who in his vastness is a continent of bliss, — the friend of the Soma-giver and he carries him safely through, — to that Indra raise the chant.

(SAYANA'S INTERPRETATION)

1. "The doer of (works that have) a good shape, Indra, we call daily for protection as (one calls) for the cow-milker a good milch-cow.
2. "Come to our (three) libations, drink of the Soma, O Soma-drinker; the intoxication of thee, the wealthy one, is indeed cow-giving.
3. "Then (standing) among the intelligent people who are nearest to thee, may we know thee. Do not (go) beyond us (and) manifest (thyself to others, but) come to us.
4. "Come to him and question about me, the intelligent one, (whether I have praised him rightly or not), — to the intelligent and unhurt Indra who gives to thy friends (the priests) the best wealth.
5. "Let of us (i.e. our priests) speak (i.e. praise Indra), — and also, O you who censure, go out (from here) and from elsewhere too, — (our priests) doing service all about Indra.
6. "O destroyer (of foes), may even our enemies speak of us as having good wealth, — men (i.e. our friends will say it of course); may we be in the peace (bestowed) by Indra.
7. "Bring this Soma, that wealth of the sacrifice, the cause of exhilaration to men, (the Soma) that pervades (the three oblations) for Indra who pervades (the Soma-offering), that attains the rites and is friendly to (Indra) who gives joy (to the sacrificer).

8. "Drinking of this, O thou of many actions, thou becamest a slayer of Vritras (i.e. enemies led by Vritra) and didst protect entirely the fighter in the fights.
9. "O Indra of many actions, for enjoyment of riches we make thee abundant in food who art strong in the battles.[3]
10. "Sing to that Indra who is a protector of wealth, great, a good fulfiller (of works) and a friend of the sacrificer."

COMMENTARY

Madhuchchhandas, son of Vishwamitra, invokes in the Soma-offering Indra, the Master of luminous Mind, for increase in the Light. The symbols of the hymn are those of a collective sacrifice. Its subject is the growth of power and delight in Indra by the drinking of the Soma, the wine of immortality, and the consequent illumination of the human being so that the obstructions of his inner knowledge are removed and he attains to the utmost splendours of the liberated mind.

But what is this Soma, called sometimes amrita, the Greek ambrosia, as if it were itself the substance of immortality? It is a figure for the divine Ananda, the principle of Bliss, from which, in the Vedic conception, the existence of Man, this mental being, is drawn. A secret Delight is the base of existence, its sustaining atmosphere and almost its substance. This Ananda is spoken of in the Taittiriya Upanishad as the ethereal atmosphere of bliss without which nothing could remain in being. In the Aitareya Upanishad Soma, as the lunar deity, is born from the sense-mind

[3] Note that Sayana explains *vājinam* in v. 8 as "fighter in the fights" and the same expression in the very next verse as "strong in the fights" and that in the phrase *vājeṣu vājinaṁ vājayāmaḥ* he takes the base word *vāja* in three different significances, "battle", "strength" and "food". This is a typical example of the deliberate inconsistency of Sayana's method.

I have given the two renderings together so that the reader may make an easy comparison between both methods and results. I enclose within brackets the commentator's explanations wherever they are necessary to complete the sense or to make it intelligible. Even the reader unacquainted with Sanskrit will be able, I think, to appreciate from this single example the reasons which justify the modern critical mind in refusing to accept Sayana as a reliable authority for the interpretation of the Vedic text.

in the universal Purusha and, when man is produced, expresses himself again as sense-mentality in the human being. For delight is the *raison d'être* of sensation, or, we may say, sensation is an attempt to translate the secret delight of existence into the terms of physical consciousness. But in that consciousness, — often figured as *adri*, the hill, stone, or dense substance, — divine light and divine delight are both of them concealed and confined, and have to be released or extracted. Ananda is retained as *rasa*, the sap, the essence, in sense-objects and sense-experiences, in the plants and growths of the earth-nature, and among these growths the mystic Soma-plant symbolises that element behind all sense activities and their enjoyments which yields the divine essence. It has to be distilled and, once distilled, purified and intensified until it has grown luminous, full of radiance, full of swiftness, full of energy, *gomat*, *āśu*, *yuvāku*. It becomes the chief food of the gods who, called to the Soma-oblation, take their share of the enjoyment and in the strength of that ecstasy increase in man, exalt him to his highest possibilities, make him capable of the supreme experiences. Those who do not give the delight in them as an offering to the divine Powers, preferring to reserve themselves for the sense and the lower life, are adorers not of the gods, but of the Panis, lords of the sense-consciousness, traffickers in its limited activities, they who press not the mystic wine, give not the purified offering, raise not the sacred chant. It is the Panis who steal from us the Rays of the illumined consciousness, those brilliant herds of the sun, and pen them up in the cavern of the subconscient, in the dense hill of matter, corrupting even Sarama, the hound of heaven, the luminous intuition, when she comes on their track to the cave of the Panis.

But the conception of this hymn belongs to a stage in our inner progress when the Panis have been exceeded and even the Vritras or Coverers who seclude from us our full powers and activities and Vala who holds back the Light, are already overpassed. But there are even then powers that stand in the way of our perfection. They are the powers of limitation, the Confiners or Censurers, who, without altogether obscuring the

rays or damming up the energies, yet seek by constantly affirming the deficiencies of our self-expression to limit its field and set up the progress realised as an obstacle to the progress to come. Madhuchchhandas calls upon Indra to remove the defect and affirm in its place an increasing illumination.

The principle which Indra represents is Mind-Power released from the limits and obscurations of the nervous consciousness. It is this enlightened Intelligence which fashions right or perfect forms of thought or of action not deformed by the nervous impulses, not hampered by the falsehoods of sense. The image presented is that of a cow giving abundantly its yield to the milker of the herds. The word *go* means in Sanskrit both a cow and a ray of light. This double sense is used by the Vedic symbolists to suggest a double figure which was to them more than a figure; for light, in their view, is not merely an apt poetic image of thought, but is actually its physical form. Thus, the herds that are milked are the Herds of the Sun, — Surya, God of the revelatory and intuitive mind, or else of Dawn, the goddess who manifests the solar glory. The Rishi desires from Indra a daily increase of this light of Truth by his fuller activity pouring rays in a rich yield upon the receptive mind.

The activity of the pure illuminated Intelligence is sustained and increased by the conscious expression in us of the delight in divine existence and divine activity typified by the Soma wine. As the Intelligence feeds upon it, its action becomes an intoxicated ecstasy of inspiration by which the rays come pouring abundantly and joyously in. "Light-giving indeed is the intoxication of thee in thy rapture."

For then it is possible, breaking beyond the limitations still insisted upon by the Confiners, to arrive at something of the finalities of knowledge possible to the illuminated intelligence. Right thoughts, right sensibilities, — this is the full sense of the word *sumati*; for the Vedic *mati* includes not only the thinking, but also the emotional parts of mentality. *Sumati* is a light in the thoughts; it is also a bright gladness and kindness in the soul. But in this passage the stress of the sense is upon right thought and not on the emotions. It is necessary, however, that the progress

in right thinking should commence in the field of consciousness already attained; there must not be flashes and dazzling manifestations which by going beyond our powers elude expression in right form and confuse the receptive mind. Indra must be not only illuminer, but a fashioner of right thought-formations, *surūpakṛtnu*.

The Rishi, next, turning to a comrade in the collective Yoga, or, perhaps, addressing his own mind, encourages him or it to pass beyond the obstruction of the adverse suggestions opposed to him and by questioning the divine Intelligence progress to the highest good which it has already given to others. For it is that Intelligence which clearly discerns and can solve or remove all still-existing confusion and obscuration. Swift of movement, intense, energetic, it does not by its energy stumble in its paths like the impulses of the nervous consciousness. Or perhaps it is rather meant that owing to its invincible energy it does not succumb to the attacks whether of the Coverers or of the powers that limit.

Next are described the results towards which the seer aspires. With this fuller light opening on to the finalities of mental knowledge the powers of Limitation will be satisfied and of themselves will withdraw, consenting to the farther advance and to the new luminous activities. They will say, in effect, "Yes, now you have the right which we were hitherto justified in denying. Not only in the fields won already, but in other and untrod provinces pursue then your conquering march. Repose this action wholly on the divine Intelligence, not upon your lower capacities. For it is the greater surrender which gives you the greater right."

The word *ārata*, move or strive, like its congeners *ari*, *arya*, *ārya*, *arata*, *araṇi*, expresses the central idea of the Veda. The root *ar* indicates always a movement of effort or of struggle or a state of surpassing height or excellence; it is applied to rowing, ploughing, fighting, lifting, climbing. The Aryan then is the man who seeks to fulfil himself by the Vedic action, the internal and external *karma* or *apas*, which is of the nature of a sacrifice to the gods. But it is also imaged as a journey, a march, a battle,

a climbing upwards. The Aryan man labours towards heights, fights his way on in a march which is at once a progress forward and an ascent. That is his Aryahood, his *aretē*, virtue, to use a Greek word derived from the same root. *Ārata*, with the rest of the phrase, might be translated, "Out and push forward in other fields."

The idea is taken up again, in the subtle Vedic fashion of thought-connections by word-echoes, with the *ariḥ kṛṣṭayaḥ* of the next verse. These are, I think, not the Aryan nations on earth, although that sense too is possible when the idea is that of a collective or national Yoga, but the powers that help man in his ascent, his spiritual kindred bound to him as comrades, allies, brothers, yokefellows (*sakhāyaḥ*, *yujaḥ*, *jāmayaḥ*), for his aspiration is their aspiration and by his completeness they are fulfilled. As the Restrainers are satisfied and give way, so they too, satisfied, must affirm finally their task accomplished by the fullness of human bliss, when the soul shall rest in the peace of Indra that comes with the Light, the peace of a perfected mentality standing as upon heights of consummated consciousness and Beatitude.

Therefore is the divine Ananda poured out to be made swift and intense in the system and offered to Indra for the support of his intensities. For it is this profound joy manifest in the inner sensations that gives the ecstasy by which the man or the God grows strong. The divine Intelligence will be able to move forward in the journey yet uncompleted and will return the gift by fresh powers of the Beatitude descending upon the friend of God.

For it was in this strength that the Divine Mind in man destroyed all that opposed, as Coverers or besiegers, its hundredfold activities of will and of thought; in this strength it protected afterwards the rich and various possessions already won in past battles from the *Atris* and *Dasyus*, devourers and plunderers of our gains.

Although, continues Madhuchchhandas, that Intelligence is already thus rich and variously stored we seek to increase yet more its force of abundance, removing the Restrainers as well as

the Vritras, so that we may have the full and assured possession of our riches.

For this Light is, in its entire greatness free from limitation, a continent of felicity; this Power is that which befriends the human soul and carries it safe through the battle, to the end of its march, to the summit of its aspiration.

III

Indra and the Thought-Forces

Rig Veda I.171

प्रति व एना नमसाहमेमि सूक्तेन भिक्षे सुमतिं तुराणाम् ।
रराणता मरुतो वेद्याभिर्नि हेळो धत्त वि मुचध्वमश्वान् ॥ १ ॥

1. To you I come with this obeisance, by the perfect Word I seek right mentality from the swift in the passage. Take delight, O Maruts, in the things of knowledge, lay aside your wrath, unyoke your steeds.

एष वः स्तोमो मरुतो नमस्वान् हृदा तष्टो मनसा धायि देवाः ।
उपेमा यात मनसा जुषाणा यूयं हि ष्ठा नमस इद् वृधासः ॥ २ ॥

2. Lo, the hymn of your affirmation, O Maruts; it is fraught with my obeisance, it was framed by the heart, it was established by the mind, O ye gods. Approach these my words and embrace them with the mind; for of submission[1] are you the increasers.

स्तुतासो नो मरुतो मृळयन्तूत स्तुतो मघवा शम्भविष्ठः ।
ऊर्ध्वा नः सन्तु कोम्या वनान्यहानि विश्वा मरुतो जिगीषा ॥ ३ ॥

3. Affirmed let the Maruts be benign to us, affirmed the lord of plenitude has become wholly creative of felicity. Upward

[1] *Namas*. Sayana takes *namas* throughout in his favourite sense, food; for "increasers of salutation" is obviously impossible. It is evident from this and other passages that behind the physical sense of obeisance the word carries with it a psychological significance which here disengages itself clearly from the concrete figure.

may our desirable delights[2] be uplifted, O Maruts, upward all our days by the will towards victory.

अस्मादहं तविषादीषमाण इन्द्राद् भिया मरुतो रेजमानः ।
युष्मभ्यं हव्या निशितान्यासन् तान्यारे चकृमा मृळता नः ॥ ४॥

4. I, mastered by this mighty one, trembling with the fear of Indra, O Maruts, put far away the offerings that for you had been made intense. Let your grace be upon us.

येन मानासश्चितयन्त उस्रा व्युष्टिषु शवसा शश्वतीनाम् ।
स नो मरुद्भिर्वृषभ श्रवो धा उग्र उग्रेभिः स्थविरः सहोदाः ॥ ५॥

5. Thou by whom the movements of the mind grow conscient and brilliant[3] in our mornings through the bright power[4] of the continuous Dawns, O Bull of the herd,[5] establish by the Maruts inspired knowledge in us — by them in their energy thou energetic, steadfast, a giver of might.

त्वं पाहीन्द्र सहीयसो नॄन् भवा मरुद्भिरवयातहेळाः ।
सुप्रकेतेभिः सासहिर्दधानो विद्यामेषं वृजनं जीरदानुम् ॥ ६॥

2 *Vanāni*. The word means both "forests" and "enjoyments" or as an adjective, "enjoyable". It has commonly the double sense in the Veda, the "pleasant growths" of our physical existence, *romāṇi pṛthivyāḥ*.

3 *Usrāḥ*. In the feminine the word is used as a synonym for the Vedic *go*, meaning at once Cow and ray of light. Usha, the Dawn, also, is *gomatī*, girt with rays or accompanied by the herds of the Sun. There is in the text a significant assonance, *usrā vy-uṣṭiṣu*, one of the common devices used by the Vedic Rishis to suggest a thought or a connection which they do not consider it essential to bring out expressly.

4 *Śavas*. There are a host of words in the Veda for strength, force, power and each of them carries with it its own peculiar shade of significance. *Śavas* usually conveys the idea of light as well as force.

5 *Vṛṣabha*. Bull, Male, Lord or Puissant. Indra is constantly spoken of as *Vṛṣabha* or *Vṛṣan*. The word is sometimes used by itself, as here, sometimes with another word governed by it to bring out the idea of the herds, e.g. *Vṛṣabha matīnām*, Lord of the thoughts, where the image of the bull and the herd is plainly intended.

6. Do thou, O Indra, protect the Powers[6] in their increased might; put away thy wrath against the Maruts, by them in thy forcefulness upheld, who have right perceptions. May we find the strong impulsion that shall break swiftly through.

COMMENTARY

A sequel to the colloquy of Indra and Agastya, this Sukta is Agastya's hymn of propitiation to the Maruts whose sacrifice he had interrupted at the bidding of the mightier deity. Less directly, it is connected in thought with the 165th hymn of the Mandala, the colloquy of Indra and the Maruts, in which the supremacy of the Lord of Heaven is declared and these lesser shining hosts are admitted as subordinate powers who impart to men their impulsion towards the high truths which belong to Indra. "Giving the energy of your breath to their thoughts of varied light, become in them impellers to the knowledge of my truths. Whensoever the doer becomes active for the work and the intelligence of the thinker creates us in him, O Maruts, move surely towards that illumined seer," — such is the closing word of the colloquy, the final injunction of Indra to the inferior deities.

These verses fix clearly enough the psychological function of the Maruts. They are not properly gods of thought, rather gods of energy; still, it is in the mind that their energies become effective. To the uninstructed Aryan worshipper, the Maruts were powers of wind, storm and rain; it is the images of the tempest that are most commonly applied to them and they are spoken of as the Rudras, the fierce, impetuous ones, — a name that they share with the god of Force, Agni. Although Indra is described sometimes as the eldest of the Maruts, — *indrajyeṣṭho*

6 *Nṝn.* The word *nṛ* seems to have meant originally active, swift or strong. We have *nṛmṇa*, strength, and *nṛtama nṛṇām*, most puissant of the Powers. It came afterwards to mean male or man and in the Veda is oftenest applied to the gods as the male powers or Purushas presiding over the energies of Nature as opposed to the female powers, who are called *gnā*.

marudgaṇaḥ, — yet they would seem at first to belong rather to the domain of Vayu, the Wind-God, who in the Vedic system is the Master of Life, inspirer of that Breath or dynamic energy, called the Prana, which is represented in man by the vital and nervous activities. But this is only a part of their physiognomy. Brilliance, no less than impetuosity, is their characteristic. Everything about them is lustrous, themselves, their shining weapons, their golden ornaments, their resplendent cars. Not only do they send down the rain, the waters, the abundance of heaven, and break down the things best established to make way for new movements and new formations, — functions which, for the rest, they share with other gods, Indra, Mitra, Varuna, — but, like them, they also are friends of Truth, creators of Light. It is so that the Rishi, Gotama Rahugana, prays to them, "O ye who have the flashing strength of the Truth, manifest that by your might; pierce with your lightning the Rakshasa. Conceal the concealing darkness, repel every devourer, create the Light for which we long." And in another hymn, Agastya says to them, "They carry with them the sweetness (of the Ananda) as their eternal offspring and play out their play, brilliant in the activities of knowledge." The Maruts, therefore, are energies of the mentality, energies which make for knowledge. Theirs is not the settled truth, the diffused light, but the movement, the search, the lightning-flash, and, when Truth is found, the many-sided play of its separate illuminations.

We have seen that Agastya in his colloquy with Indra speaks more than once of the Maruts. They are Indra's brothers, and therefore the god should not strike at Agastya in his struggle towards perfection. They are his instruments for that perfection, and as such Indra should use them. And in the closing formula of submission and reconciliation, he prays to the god to parley again with the Maruts and to agree with them so that the sacrifice may proceed in the order and movement of the divine Truth towards which it is directed. The crisis, then, that left so powerful an impression on the mind of the seer, was in the nature of a violent struggle in which the higher divine Power confronted Agastya and the Maruts and opposed their impetuous advance.

There has been wrath and strife between the divine Intelligence that governs the world and the vehement aspiring powers of Agastya's mind. Both would have the human being reach his goal; but not as the inferior divine powers choose must that march be directed, — rather as it has been firmly willed and settled above by the secret Intelligence that always possesses for the manifested intelligence that still seeks. Therefore the mind of the human being has been turned into a battle-field for greater Powers and is still quivering with the awe and alarm of that experience.

The submission to Indra has been made; Agastya now appeals to the Maruts to accept the terms of the reconciliation, so that the full harmony of his inner being may be restored. He approaches them with the submission he has rendered to the greater god and extends it to their brilliant legions. The perfection of the mental state and its powers which he desires, their clearness, rectitude, truth-observing energy, is not possible without the swift coursing of the Thought-Forces in their movement towards the higher knowledge. But that movement, mistakenly directed, not rightly illumined, has been checked by the formidable opposition of Indra and has departed for a time out of Agastya's mentality. Thus repelled, the Maruts have left him for other sacrificers; elsewhere shine their resplendent chariots, in other fields thunder the hooves of their wind-footed steeds. The Seer prays to them to put aside their wrath, to take pleasure once more in the pursuit of knowledge and in its activities; not passing him by any more, let them unyoke their steeds, descend and take their place on the seat of the sacrifice, assume their share of the offerings.

For he would confirm again in himself these splendid energies, and it is a hymn of affirmation that he offers them, the *stoma* of the Vedic sages. In the system of the Mystics, which has partially survived in the schools of Indian Yoga, the Word is a power, the Word creates. For all creation is expression, everything exists already in the secret abode of the Infinite, *guhā hitam*, and has only to be brought out here in apparent form by the active consciousness. Certain schools of Vedic thought even

suppose the worlds to have been created by the goddess Word and sound as first etheric vibration to have preceded formation. In the Veda itself there are passages which treat the poetic measures of the sacred mantras, — *anuṣṭubh*, *triṣṭubh*, *jagatī*, *gāyatrī*, — as symbolic of the rhythms in which the universal movement of things is cast.

By expression then we create and men are even said to create the gods in themselves by the mantra. Again, that which we have created in our consciousness by the Word, we can fix there by the Word to become part of ourselves and effective not only in our inner life but upon the outer physical world. By expression we form, by affirmation we establish. As a power of expression the word is termed *gīḥ* or *vacas*; as a power of affirmation, *stoma*. In either aspect it is named *manma* or *mantra*, expression of thought in mind, and *brahman*, expression of the heart or the soul, — for this seems to have been the earlier sense of the word *brahman*,[7] afterwards applied to the Supreme Soul or universal Being.

The process of formation of the mantra is described in the second verse along with the conditions of its effectivity. Agastya presents the *stoma*, hymn at once of affirmation and of submission, to the Maruts. Fashioned by the heart, it receives its just place in the mentality through confirmation by the mind. The mantra, though it expresses thought in mind, is not in its essential part a creation of the intellect. To be the sacred and effective word, it must have come as an inspiration from the supra-mental plane, termed in Veda, Ritam, the Truth, and have been received into the superficial consciousness either through the heart or by the luminous intelligence, *manīṣā*. The heart in Vedic psychology is not restricted to the seat of the emotions; it includes all that large tract of spontaneous mentality, nearest to the subconscient in us, out of which rise the sensations, emotions, instincts, impulses and all those intuitions and inspirations

[7] Also found in the form *bṛh* (Brihaspati, Brahmanaspati); and there seem to have been older forms, *bṛhan* and *brahan*. It is from *brahan* (gen. *brahnas*) that, in all probability, we have the Greek *phren*, *phrenos*, signifying mind.

that travel through these agencies before they arrive at form in the intelligence. This is the "heart" of Veda and Vedanta, *hṛdaya*, *hṛd*, or *brahman*. There in the present state of mankind the Purusha is supposed to be seated centrally. Nearer to the vastness of the subconscient, it is there that, in ordinary mankind, — man not yet exalted to a higher plane where the contact with the Infinite is luminous, intimate and direct, — the inspirations of the Universal Soul can most easily enter in and most swiftly take possession of the individual soul. It is therefore by the power of the heart that the mantra takes form. But it has to be received and held in the thought of the intelligence as well as in the perceptions of the heart; for not till the intelligence has accepted and even brooded upon it, can that truth of thought which the truth of the Word expresses be firmly possessed or normally effective. Fashioned by the heart, it is confirmed by the mind.

But another approval is also needed. The individual mind has accepted; the effective powers of the Cosmos must also accept. The words of the hymn retained by the mind form a basis for the new mental posture from which the future thought-energies have to proceed. The Maruts must approach them and take their stand upon them, the mind of these universal Powers approve and unite itself with the formations in the mind of the individual. So only can our inner or our outer action have its supreme effectivity.

Nor have the Maruts any reason to refuse their assent or to persist in the prolongation of discord. Divine powers who themselves obey a higher law than the personal impulse, it should be their function, as it is their essential nature, to assist the mortal in his surrender to the Immortal and increase obedience to the Truth, the Vast towards which his human faculties aspire.

Indra, affirmed and accepted, is no longer in his contact with the mortal a cause of suffering; the divine touch is now utterly creative of peace and felicity. The Maruts too, affirmed and accepted, must put aside their violence. Assuming their gentler forms, benignant in their action, not leading the soul through strife and disturbance, they too must become purely beneficent as well as puissant agencies.

This complete harmony established, Agastya's Yoga will proceed triumphantly on the new and straight path prescribed to it. It is always the elevation to a higher plane that is the end, — higher than the ordinary life of divided and egoistic sensation, emotion, thought and action. And it is to be pursued always with the same puissant will towards victory over all that resists and hampers. But it must be an integral exaltation. All the joys that the human being seeks with his desire, all the active energies of his waking consciousness, — his days, as it is expressed in the brief symbolic language of the Veda, — must be uplifted to that higher plane. By *vanāni* are meant the receptive sensations seeking in all objectivities the Ananda whose quest is their reason for existence. These, too, are not excluded. Nothing has to be rejected, all has to be raised to the pure levels of the divine consciousness.

Formerly Agastya had prepared the sacrifice for the Maruts under other conditions. He had put their full potentiality of force into all in him that he sought to place in the hands of the Thought-Powers; but because of the defect in his sacrifice he had been met midway by the Mighty One as by an enemy and only after fear and strong suffering had his eyes been opened and his soul surrendered. Still vibrating with the emotions of that experience, he has been compelled to renounce the activities which he had so puissantly prepared. Now he offers the sacrifice again to the Maruts, but couples with that brilliant Name the more puissant godhead of Indra. Let the Maruts then bear no wrath for the interrupted sacrifice but accept this new and more justly guided action.

Agastya turns, in the two closing verses, from the Maruts to Indra. The Maruts represent the progressive illumination of human mentality, until from the first obscure movements of mind which only just emerge out of the darkness of the subconscient, they are transformed into an image of the luminous consciousness of which Indra is the Purusha, the representative Being. Obscure, they become conscient; twilit, half-lit or turned into misleading reflections, they surmount these deficiencies and put on the divine brilliance. This great evolution is effected in Time

gradually, in the mornings of the human spirit, by the unbroken succession of the Dawns. For Dawn in the Veda is the goddess symbolic of new openings of divine illumination on man's physical consciousness. She alternates with her sister Night; but that darkness itself is a mother of light and always Dawn comes to reveal what the black-browed Mother has prepared. Here, however, the seer seems to speak of continuous dawns, not broken by these intervals of apparent rest and obscurity. By the brilliant force of that continuity of successive illuminations the mentality of man ascends swiftly into fullest light. But always the force which has governed and made possible the transformation, is the puissance of Indra. It is that supreme Intelligence which through the Dawns, through the Maruts, has been pouring itself into the human being. Indra is the Bull of the radiant herd, the Master of the thought-energies, the Lord of the luminous dawns.

Now also let Indra use the Maruts as his instruments for the illumination. By them let him establish the supramental knowledge of the seer. By their energy his energy will be supported in the human nature and he will give that nature his divine firmness, his divine force, so that it may not stumble under the shock or fail to contain the vaster play of puissant activities too great for our ordinary capacity.

The Maruts, thus reinforced in strength, will always need the guidance and protection of the superior Power. They are the Purushas of the separate thought-energies, Indra the one Purusha of all thought-energy. In him they find their fullness and their harmony. Let there then be no longer strife and disagreement between this whole and these parts. The Maruts, accepting Indra, will receive from him the right perception of the things that have to be known. They will not be misled by the brilliance of a partial light or carried too far by the absorption of a limited energy. They will be able to sustain the action of Indra as he puts forth his force against all that may yet stand between the soul and its consummation.

So in the harmony of these divine Powers and their aspirations may humanity find that impulsion which shall be strong

enough to break through the myriad oppositions of this world and, in the individual with his composite personality or in the race, pass rapidly on towards the goal so constantly glimpsed but so distant even to him who seems to himself almost to have attained.

IV

Agni, the Illumined Will

Rig Veda I.77

कथा दाशेमाग्नये कास्मै देवजुष्टोच्यते भामिने गीः ।
यो मर्त्येष्वमृत ऋतावा होता यजिष्ठ इत् कृणोति देवान् ॥१॥

1. How shall we give to Agni? For him what Word accepted by the Gods is spoken, for the lord of the brilliant flame? for him who in mortals, immortal, possessed of the Truth, priest of the oblation strongest for sacrifice, creates the gods?

यो अध्वरेषु शंतम ऋतावा होता तमू नमोभिरा कृणुध्वम् ।
अग्निर्यद् वेर्मर्ताय देवान्त्स चा बोधाति मनसा यजाति ॥२॥

2. He who in the sacrifices is the priest of the offering, full of peace, full of the Truth, him verily form in you by your surrenderings; when Agni manifests[1] for the mortals the gods, he also has perception of them and by the mind offers to them the sacrifice.

स हि क्रतुः स मर्यः स साधुर्मित्रो न भूदद्भुतस्य रथीः ।
तं मेधेषु प्रथमं देवयन्तीर्विश उप ब्रुवते दस्ममारीः ॥३॥

3. For he is the will, he is the strength, he is the effecter of perfection, even as Mitra he becomes the charioteer of the Supreme. To him, the first, in the rich-offerings the people seeking the godhead utter the word, the Aryan people to the fulfiller.

[1] Or "enters into the gods".

स नो नृणां नृतमो रिशादा अग्निर्गिरोऽवसा वेतु धीतिम् ।
तना च ये मघवानः शविष्ठा वाजप्रसूता इषयन्त मन्म ॥ ४ ॥

4. May this strongest of the Powers and devourer of the destroyers manifest[2] by his presence the Words and their understanding, and may they who in their extension are lords of plenitude brightest in energy pour forth their plenty and give their impulsion to the thought.

एवाग्निर्गोतमेभिर्ऋतावा विप्रेभिरस्तोष्ट जातवेदाः ।
स एषु द्युम्नं पीपयत्स वाजं स पुष्टिं याति जोषमा चिकित्वान् ॥ ५ ॥

5. Thus has Agni possessed of the Truth been affirmed by the masters of light,[3] the knower of the worlds by clarified minds. He shall foster in them the force of illumination, he too the plenty; he shall attain to increase and to harmony by his perceptions.

COMMENTARY

Gotama Rahugana is the seer of this Hymn, which is a *stoma* in praise of Agni, the divine Will at work in the universe.

Agni is the most important, the most universal of the Vedic gods. In the physical world he is the general devourer and enjoyer. He is also the purifier; when he devours and enjoys, then also he purifies. He is the fire that prepares and perfects; he is also the fire that assimilates and the heat of energy that forms. He is the heat of life and creates the sap, the *rasa* in things, the essence of their substantial being and the essence of their delight.

He is equally the Will in Prana, the dynamic Life-energy, and in that energy performs the same functions. Devouring and

[2] Or "enter into the words and the thinking".

[3] *Gotamebhiḥ*. In its external sense "by the Gotamas", the family of the Rishi, Gotama Rahugana, the seer of the hymn. But the names of the Rishis are constantly used with a covert reference to their meaning. In this passage there is an unmistakable significance in the grouping of the words, *gotamebhir ṛtāvā*, *viprebhir jātavedāḥ*, as in verse 3 in *dasmam ārīḥ*.

enjoying, purifying, preparing, assimilating, forming, he rises upwards always and transfigures his powers into the Maruts, the energies of Mind. Our passions and obscure emotions are the smoke of Agni's burning. All our nervous forces are assured of their action only by his support.

If he is the Will in our nervous being and purifies it by action, he is also the Will in the mind and clarifies it by aspiration. When he enters into the intellect, he is drawing near to his divine birth-place and home. He leads the thoughts towards effective power; he leads the active energies towards light.

His divine birth-place and home, — though he is born everywhere and dwells in all things, — is the Truth, the Infinity, the vast cosmic Intelligence in which Knowledge and Force are unified. For there all Will is in harmony with the truth of things and therefore effective; all thought part of Wisdom, which is the divine Law, and therefore perfectly regulative of a divine action. Agni fulfilled becomes mighty in his own home — in the Truth, the Right, the Vast. It is thither that he is leading upward the aspiration in humanity, the soul of the Aryan, the head of the cosmic sacrifice.

It is at the point where there is the first possibility of the great passage, the transition from mind to supermind, the transfiguration of the intelligence, till now the crowned leader of the mental being, into a divine Light, — it is at this supreme and crucial point in the Vedic Yoga that the Rishi, Gotama Rahugana, seeks in himself for the inspired Word. The Word shall help him to realise for himself and others the Power that must effect the transition and the state of luminous plenitude from which the transfiguration must commence.

The Vedic sacrifice is, psychologically, a symbol of cosmic and individual activity become self-conscious, enlightened and aware of its goal. The whole process of the universe is in its very nature a sacrifice, voluntary or involuntary. Self-fulfilment by self-immolation, to grow by giving is the universal law. That which refuses to give itself, is still the food of the cosmic Powers. "The eater eating is eaten" is the formula, pregnant and terrible, in which the Upanishad sums up this aspect of the universe, and

in another passage men are described as the cattle of the gods. It is only when the law is recognised and voluntarily accepted that this kingdom of death can be overpassed and by the works of sacrifice Immortality made possible and attained. All the powers and potentialities of the human life are offered up, in the symbol of a sacrifice, to the divine Life in the Cosmos.

Knowledge, Force and Delight are the three powers of the divine Life; thought and its formations, will and its works, love and its harmonisings are the corresponding human activities which have to be exalted to the divine level. The dualities of truth and falsehood, light and darkness, conceptional right and wrong are the confusions of knowledge born of egoistic division; the dualities of egoistic love and hatred, joy and grief, pleasure and pain are the confusions of Love, perversities of Ananda; the dualities of strength and weakness, sin and virtue, action and inaction are the confusions of will, dissipators of the divine Force. And all these confusions arise and even become necessary modes of our action because the triune powers of the divine Life are divorced from each other, Knowledge from Strength, Love from both, by the Ignorance which divides. It is the Ignorance, the dominant cosmic Falsehood that has to be removed. Through the Truth, then, lies the road to the true harmony, the consummated felicity, the ultimate fulfilment of love in the divine Delight. Therefore, only when the Will in man becomes divine and possessed of the Truth, *amṛto ṛtāvā*, can the perfection towards which we move be realised in humanity.

Agni, then, is the god who has to become conscient in the mortal. Him the inspired Word has to express, to confirm in this gated mansion and on the altar-seat of this sacrifice.

"How must we give to Agni?" asks the Rishi. The word for the sacrificial giving, *dāśema*, means literally distribution; it has a covert connection with the root *daś* in the sense of discernment. The sacrifice is essentially an arrangement, a distribution of the human activities and enjoyments among the different cosmic Powers to whose province they by right belong. Therefore the hymns repeatedly speak of the portions of the gods. It is the problem of the right arrangement and distribution of his works that

presents itself to the sacrificer; for the sacrifice must be always according to the Law and the divine ordainment (*ṛtu*, the later *vidhi*). The will to right arrangement is an all-important preparation for the reign of the supreme Law and Truth in the mortal.

The solution of the problem depends on right realisation, and right realisation starts from the right illuminative Word, expression of the inspired Thought which is sent to the seer out of the Vast. Therefore the Rishi asks farther, "What word is uttered to Agni?" What word of affirmation, what word of realisation? Two conditions have to be satisfied. The Word must be accepted by other divine Powers, that is, it must bring out some potentiality in the nature or bring into it some light of realisation by which the divine Workers may be induced to manifest in the superficial consciousness of humanity and embrace openly their respective functions. And it must be illuminative of the double nature of Agni, this Lord of the lustrous flame. *Bhāma* means both a light of knowledge and a flame of action. Agni is a Light as well as a Force.

The Word arrives. *Yo martyeṣu amṛto ṛtāvā*. Agni is, preeminently, the Immortal in mortals. It is this Agni by whom the other bright sons of Infinity are able to work out the manifestation and self-extension of the Divine (*devavīti*, *devatāti*) which is at once aim and process of the cosmic and of the human sacrifice. For he is the divine Will which in all things is always present, is always destroying and constructing, always building and perfecting, supporting always the complex progression of the universe. It is this which persists through all death and change. It is eternally and inalienably possessed of the Truth. In the last obscuration of Nature, in the lowest unintelligence of Matter, it is this Will that is a concealed knowledge and compels all these darkened movements to obey, as if mechanically, the divine Law and adhere to the truth of their Nature. It is this which makes the tree grow according to its seed and each action bear its appropriate fruit. In the obscurity of man's ignorance, — less than material Nature's, yet greater, — it is this divine Will that governs and guides, knows the sense of his blindness and the goal of his aberration and out of the crooked workings of the

cosmic Falsehood in him evolves the progressive manifestation of the cosmic Truth. Alone of the brilliant Gods, he burns bright and has full vision in the darkness of Night no less than in the splendours of day. The other gods are *uṣarbudhaḥ*, wakers with the Dawn.

Therefore is he the priest of the offering, strongest or most apt for sacrifice, he who, all-powerful, follows always the law of the Truth. We must remember that the oblation (*havya*) signifies always action (*karma*) and each action of mind or body is regarded as a giving of our plenty into the cosmic being and the cosmic intention. Agni, the divine Will, is that which stands behind the human will in its works. In the conscient offering, he comes in front; he is the priest set in front (*puro-hita*), guides the oblation and determines its effectiveness.

By this self-guided Truth, by this knowledge that works out as an unerring Will in the Cosmos, he fashions the gods in mortals. Agni manifests divine potentialities in a death-besieged body; Agni brings them to effective actuality and perfection. He creates in us the luminous forms of the Immortals.

This work he does as a cosmic Power labouring upon the rebellious human material even when in our ignorance we resist the heavenward impulse and, accustomed to offer our actions to the egoistic life, cannot yet or as yet will not make the divine surrender. But it is in proportion as we learn to subjugate the ego and compel it to bow down in every act to the universal Being and to serve consciously in its least movements the supreme Will, that Agni himself takes form in us. The Divine Will becomes present and conscient in a human mind and enlightens it with the divine Knowledge. Thus it is that man can be said to form by his toil the great Gods.

The Sanskrit expression is here *ā kṛṇudhvam*. The preposition gives the idea of a drawing upon oneself of something outside and the working or shaping it out in our own consciousness. *Ā kṛ* corresponds to the converse expression, *ā bhū*, used of the gods when they approach the mortal with the contact of Immortality and, divine form of godhead falling on form of humanity, "become", take shape, as it were, in him. The

cosmic Powers act and exist in the universe; man takes them upon himself, makes an image of them in his own consciousness and endows that image with the life and power that the Supreme Being has breathed into His own divine forms and world-energies.[4]

It is when thus present and conscient in the mortal, like a "house-lord",[5] master in his mansion, that Agni appears in the true nature of his divinity. When we are obscure and revolt against the Truth and the Law, our progress seems to be a stumbling from ignorance to ignorance and is full of pain and disturbance. By constant submission to the Truth, surrenderings, *namobhiḥ*, we create in ourselves that image of the divine Will which is on the contrary full of peace, because it is assured of the Truth and the Law. Equality of soul[6] created by the surrender to the universal Wisdom gives us a supreme peace and calm. And since that Wisdom guides all our steps in the straight paths of the Truth we are carried by it beyond all stumblings (*duritāni*).

Moreover, with Agni conscious in our humanity, the creation of the gods in us becomes a veritable manifestation and no longer a veiled growth. The will within grows conscious of the increasing godhead, awakens to the process, perceives the lines of the growth. Human action intelligently directed and devoted to the universal Powers, ceases to be a mechanical, involuntary or imperfect offering; the thinking and observing mind participates and becomes the instrument of the sacrificial will.

Agni is the power of conscious Being, called by us will, effective behind the workings of mind and body. Agni is the strong God within (*maryaḥ*, the strong, the masculine) who puts out his strength against all assailing powers, who forbids inertia, who repels every failing of heart and of force, who spurns out all lack of manhood. Agni actualises what might otherwise remain as an ineffectual thought or aspiration. He is the doer of the

4 This is the true sense and theory of Hindu image-worship, which is thus a material rendering of the great Vedic symbols.

5 *Gṛhapati*; also *viśpati*, lord or king in the creature.

6 *Samatā* of the Gita.

Yoga (*sādhu*); divine smith labouring at his forge, he hammers out our perfection. Here he is said to become the charioteer of the Supreme. The Supreme and Wonderful that moves and fulfils Itself "in the consciousness of another",[7] (we have the same word, *adbhuta*, as in the colloquy of Indra and Agastya), effects that motion with this Power as charioteer holding the reins of the activity. Mitra also, the lord of Love and Light is even such a charioteer. Love illuminated fulfils the harmony which is the goal of the divine movement. But the power of this lord of Will and Light is also needed. Force and Love united and both illumined by Knowledge fulfil God in the world.

Will is the first necessity, the chief actualising force. When therefore the race of mortals turn consciously towards the great aim and, offering their enriched capacities to the Sons of Heaven, seek to form the divine in themselves, it is to Agni, first and chief, that they lift the realising thought, frame the creative Word. For they are the Aryans who do the work and accept the effort, — the vastest of all works, the most grandiose of all efforts, — and he is the power that embraces Action and by Action fulfils the work. What is the Aryan without the divine Will that accepts the labour and the battle, works and wins, suffers and triumphs?

Therefore it is this Will which annihilates all forces commissioned to destroy the effort, this strongest of all the divine Puissances in which the supreme Purusha has imaged Himself, that must bestow its presence on these human vessels. There it will use the mind as instrument of the sacrifice and by its very presence manifest those inspired and realising Words which are as a chariot framed for the movement of the gods, giving to the Thought that meditates the illuminative comprehension which allows the forms of the divine Powers to outline themselves in our waking consciousness.

Then may those other mighty Ones who bring with them the plenitudes of the higher life, Indra and the Ashwins, Usha and Surya, Varuna and Mitra and Aryaman, assume with that formative extension of themselves in the human being their most

[7] R.V. I.170.1.

brilliant energies. Let them create their plenty in us, pouring it forth from the secret places of our being so as to be utilisable in its daylight tracts and let their impulsions urge upward the divinising thought in Mind, till it transfigures itself in the supreme lustres.

The hymn closes. Thus, in inspired words, has the divine Will, Agni, been affirmed by the sacred chant of the Gotamas. The Rishi uses his name and that of his house as a symbol-word; we have in it the Vedic *go* in the sense "luminous", and Gotama means "entirely possessed of light". For it is only those that have the plenitude of the luminous intelligence by whom the master of divine Truth can be wholly received and affirmed in this world of an inferior Ray, — *gotamebhir ṛtāvā*. And it is upon those whose minds are pure, clear and open, *vipra*, that there can dawn the right knowledge of the great Births which are behind the physical world and from which it derives and supports its energies, — *viprebhir jātavedāḥ*.

Agni is Jatavedas, knower of the births, the worlds. He knows entirely the five worlds[8] and is not confined in his consciousness to this limited and dependent physical harmony. He has access even to the three highest states[9] of all, to the udder of the mystic Cow,[10] the abundance of the Bull[11] with the four horns. From that abundance he will foster the illumination in these Aryan seekers, swell the plenty of their divine faculties. By that fullness and plenty of his illumined perceptions he will unite thought with thought, word with word, till the human Intelligence is rich and harmonious enough to support and become the divine Idea.

[8] The worlds in which, respectively, Matter, Life-Energy, Mind, Truth and Beatitude are the essential energies. They are called respectively Bhur, Bhuvar, Swar, Mahas and Jana or Mayas.

[9] Divine Being, Consciousness, Bliss, — Sachchidananda.

[10] Aditi, the infinite Consciousness, Mother of the worlds.

[11] The divine Purusha, Sachchidananda; the three highest states and Truth are his four horns.

V

Surya Savitri, Creator and Increaser

Rig Veda V.81

युञ्जते मन उत युञ्जते धियो विप्रा विप्रस्य बृहतो विपश्चितः ।
वि होत्रा दधे वयुनाविदेक इन्मही देवस्य सवितुः परिष्टुतिः ॥ १ ॥

1. Men illumined yoke their mind and they yoke their thoughts to him who is illumination and largeness and clear perceiving. Knowing all phenomena he orders, sole, the Energies of the sacrifice. Vast is the affirmation in all things of Savitri, the divine Creator.

विश्वा रूपाणि प्रति मुञ्चते कविः प्रासावीद् भद्रं द्विपदे चतुष्पदे ।
वि नाकमख्यत् सविता वरेण्योऽनु प्रयाणमुषसो वि राजति ॥ २ ॥

2. All forms he takes unto himself, the Seer, and he creates from them good for the twofold existence and the fourfold. The Creator, the supreme Good, manifests Heaven wholly and his light pervades all as he follows the march of the Dawn.

यस्य प्रयाणमन्वन्य इद् ययुर्देवा देवस्य महिमानमोजसा ।
यः पार्थिवानि विममे स एतशो रजांसि देवः सविता महित्वना ॥ ३ ॥

3. In the wake of his march the other gods also reach by his force to the greatness of the Divinity. He has mapped out the realms of earthly light by his mightiness, — the brilliant one, the divine Creator.

उत यासि सवितस्त्रीणि रोचनोत सूर्यस्य रश्मिभिः समुच्यसि ।
उत रात्रीमुभयतः परीयस उत मित्रो भवसि देव धर्मभिः ॥ ४ ॥

4. And thou reachest, O Savitri, to the three luminous heavens; and thou art utterly expressed by the rays of the Sun; and thou encompassest the Night upon either side; and thou becomest by the law of thy actions the lord of Love, O God.

उतेशिषे प्रसवस्य त्वमेक इदुत पूषा भवसि देव यामभिः ।
उतेदं विश्वं भुवनं वि राजसि श्यावाश्वस्ते सवितः स्तोममानशे ॥ ५ ॥

5. And thou art powerful for every creation; and thou becomest the Increaser, O God, by thy movings; and thou illuminest utterly all this world of becomings. Shyavashwa has attained to the affirmation of thee, O Savitri.[1]

COMMENTARY

Indra with his shining hosts, the Maruts, Agni, the divine force, fulfiller of the Aryan sacrifice, are the most important deities of the Vedic system. Agni is the beginning and the end. This Will that is knowledge is the initiator of the upward effort of the mortal towards Immortality; to this divine consciousness that is one with divine power we arrive as the foundation of immortal existence. Indra, lord of Swar, the luminous intelligence into which we have to convert our obscure material mentality in order to become capable of the divine consciousness, is our chief helper. It is by the aid of Indra and the Maruts that the conversion is effected. The Maruts take our animal consciousness made up of the impulses of the nervous mentality, possess these impulses with their illuminations and drive them up the hill of being towards the world of Swar and the truths of Indra. Our mental evolution begins with these animal troops, these "Pashus"; they become, as we progress in the ascension, the brilliant herds of the Sun, *gāvaḥ*, rays, the divine cows of the Veda. Such is the psychological sense of the Vedic symbol.

[1] For a good idiomatic and literary translation, rendering the sense and rhythm of the original, a certain freedom in turning the Sanskrit is necessary. I have therefore given a more literal version of its phrases in the body of the Commentary.

But who, then, is Surya, the Sun, from whom these rays proceed? He is the Master of Truth, Surya the Illuminator, Savitri the Creator, Pushan the Increaser. His rays in their own nature are supramental activities of revelation, inspiration, intuition, luminous discernment, and they constitute the action of that transcendent principle which the Vedanta calls Vijnana, the perfect knowledge, the Veda Ritam, the Truth. But these rays descend also into the human mentality and form at its summit the world of luminous intelligence, Swar, of which Indra is the lord.

For this Vijnana is a divine and not a human faculty. Man's mind is not constituted of the self-luminous truth, like the divine mind; it is a sense-mentality, Manas, which can receive and understand[2] Truth, but is not one with it. The light of knowledge has to present itself in this human understanding tempered so as to suit its forms to the capacities and limitations of the physical consciousness. And it has to lead up progressively to its own true nature, to manifest successive evolutionary stages for our mental development. Therefore the rays of Surya, as they labour to form our mental existence, create three successive worlds of mentality one superimposed on the other, — the sensational, aesthetic and emotional mind, the pure intellect and the divine intelligence. The fullness and perfection of these triple worlds of mind exists only in the pure mental plane of being,[3] where they shine above the three heavens, *tisro divaḥ*, as their three luminosities, *trīṇi rocanāni*. But their light descends upon the physical consciousness and effects the corresponding formations in its realms, the Vedic *pārthivāni rajāṁsi*, earthly realms of light. They also are triple, *tisraḥ pṛthivīḥ*, the three earths. And of all these worlds Surya Savitri is the creator.

We have in this figure of various psychological levels, each considered as a world in itself, a key to the conceptions of the

[2] The Vedic word for the understanding is *dhī*, that which receives and holds in place.

[3] Our natural plane of being is obviously the physical consciousness, but the others also are open to us since part of our being lives in each of them.

Vedic Rishis. The human individual is an organised unit of existence which reflects the constitution of the universe. It repeats in itself the same arrangement of states and play of forces. Man, subjectively, contains in himself all the worlds in which, objectively, he is contained. Preferring ordinarily a concrete to an abstract language, the Rishis speak of the physical consciousness as the physical world, earth, Bhu, Prithivi. They describe the pure mental consciousness as heaven, Dyaus, of which Swar, the luminous mind, is the summit. To the intermediate dynamic, vital or nervous consciousness they give the name either of Antariksha, the intermediate vision, or of Bhuvar, — multiple dynamic worlds formative of the Earth.

For in the idea of the Rishis a world is primarily a formation of consciousness and only secondarily a physical formation of things. A world is a *loka*, a way in which conscious being images itself. And it is the causal Truth, represented in the person of Surya Savitri, that is the creator of all its forms. For it is the causal Idea in the infinite being, — the idea, not abstract, but real and dynamic, — that originates the law, the energies, the formations of things and the working out of their potentialities in determined forms by determined processes. Because the causal Idea is a real force of existence, it is called Satyam, the True in being; because it is the determining truth of all activity and formation, it is called Ritam, the True in movement; because it is broad and infinite in its self-view, in its scope and in its operation, it is called Brihat, the Large or Vast.

Savitri by the Truth is the Creator, but not in the sense of a fabrication or mechanical forming of things. The root of the word means an impulsion, a loosing forth or sending out, — the sense also of the ordinary word for creation, *sṛṣṭi*, — and so a production. The action of the causal Idea does not fabricate, but brings out by Tapas, by the pressure of consciousness on its own being, that which is concealed in it, latent in potentiality and in truth already existent in the Beyond.

Now the forces and processes of the physical world repeat, as in a symbol, the truths of the supraphysical action which produced it. And since it is by the same forces and the same

processes, one in the physical worlds and the supraphysical, that our inner life and its development are governed, the Rishis adopted the phenomena of physical Nature as just symbols for those functionings of the inner life which it was their difficult task to indicate in the concrete language of a sacred poetry that must at the same time serve for the external worship of the Gods as powers of the visible universe. The solar energy is the physical form of Surya, Lord of Light and Truth; it is through the Truth that we arrive at Immortality, final aim of the Vedic discipline. It is therefore under the images of the Sun and its rays, of Dawn and day and night and the life of man between the two poles of light and darkness that the Aryan seers represent the progressive illumination of the human soul. It is so that Shyavashwa of the house of Atri hymns Savitri, Creator, Increaser, Revealer.

Surya enlightens the mind and the thoughts with the illuminations of the Truth. He is *vipra*, the illumined. It is he who delivers the individual human mind from the circumscribed consciousness of self and environment and enlarges the limited movement which is imposed on it by its preoccupation with its own individuality. Therefore he is *bṛhat*, the Large. But his illumination is not a vague light, nor does his largeness come by a confused and dissolved view of self and object; it holds in itself a clear discernment of things in their totality, their parts and their relations. Therefore he is *vipaścit*, the clear in perception. Men as soon as they begin to receive something of this solar illumination, strive to yoke their whole mentality and its thought-contents to the conscious existence of the divine Surya within them. That is to say, they apply, as it were, all their obscure mental state and all their erring thoughts to this Light manifested in them so that it may turn the obscurity of the mind into clearness and convert the errors of thought into those truths which they distortedly represent. This yoking (*yuñjate*) becomes their Yoga. "They yoke the mind, and they yoke their thoughts, the enlightened, of (i.e. to, or so that they may be part of or belong to) the Enlightened, the Large, the Clear-perceptioned."

Then the Lord of Truth orders all the human energies offered up to him in the terms of the Truth; for he becomes in man a sole

and sovereign Power governing all knowledge and action. Not interfered with by conflicting agencies, he governs perfectly; for he knows all manifestations, comprehends their causes, contains their law and process, compels their right result. There are seven of these sacrificial energies (Hotras) in the human being, one corresponding to each of the seven constituents of his psychological existence, — body, life, mind, super-mind, bliss, will and essential being. Their irregular action or wrong relation, caused and maintained by the obscuration of knowledge in Mind, is the source of all stumbling and unhappiness, of all evil act and evil state. Surya, Lord of Knowledge, puts each of them to its right place in the Sacrifice. "Knower of phenomena sole he arranges the sacrificial energies."

Man thus arrives at a vast and all-embracing affirmation in himself of this divine Creator. It is implied in this passage and indicated more clearly in the next verse that the result is a right and happy creation — for all our existence is a constant creation — of the universe of man's whole being. "Vast is the comprehensive affirmation of the god Savitri."

Surya is the seer, the revealer. His Truth takes into its illumination all forms of things, all the phenomenal objects and experiences which constitute our world, all the figures of the universal Consciousness within and without us. It reveals the truth in them, their sense, their purpose, their justification and right use. Ordering rightly the energies of the sacrifice it creates or produces good as the law of our whole existence. For all things have their justifiable cause of being, their good use and their right enjoyment. When this truth in them is found and utilised, all things produce good for the soul, increase its welfare, enlarge its felicity. And this divine revolution is effected both in the lower physical existence and in the more complete inner life which uses the physical for its manifestation. "The Seer takes to himself all forms, he brings out (creates or manifests) good for the twofold (two-footed), for the fourfold (four-footed)."[4]

[4] The symbolism of the words *dvipade* and *catuṣpade* may be differently interpreted. The discussion of it here would occupy too large a space.

The process of this new creation is described in the rest of the hymn. Surya, as the creator, as the supreme good, manifests in our human consciousness its concealed heavenly summit on the levels of the pure mind, and we are able to look up above from the earth of our physical existence and are delivered from the obscurities of the night of Ignorance. He follows, sunlike, the march of the Dawn, illuminating all the regions of our being on which falls its light; for there is always needed the precursory mental illumination before the Truth itself, the supramental principle, can take possession of this lower existence. "The creator, the supremely desirable, manifests all heaven and shines pervadingly following (after or according to) the movement forward of the Dawn."

All the other gods follow in this march of Surya and they attain to his vastness by the force of his illumination. That is to say, all the other divine faculties or potentialities in man expand with the expansion of the Truth and Light in him; in the strength of the ideal super-mind they attain to the same infinite amplitude of right becoming, right action and right knowledge. The Truth in its largeness moulds all into the terms of the infinite and universal Life, replaces with it the limited individual existence, maps out in the terms of their real being the realms of the physical consciousness which, as Savitri, it has created. This also is in us a creation, although in reality it only manifests what already exists but was concealed by the darkness of our ignorance, — just as the realms of the physical earth are concealed from our eyes by the darkness, but reveal themselves as the sun in his march follows the Dawn and measures them out one by one to the vision. "Following whose march the other gods too reach the vastness of the divinity by his strength, he who maps out entirely — that brilliant one — the earthly realms of light, the god Savitri, by his greatness."

But it is not only the full capacity of our physical or earthly consciousness that this divine Truth illuminates and forms for a perfect action. It pervades the three luminous realms of the pure mind (*trīṇi rocanā*); it puts us in contact with all the divine possibilities of the sensations and emotions, of the intellect, of

the intuitive reason and liberating the superior faculties from their limitation and constant reference to the material world fulfils our entire mental being. Its activities receive their completest manifestation; they are gathered up into the life of the complete Truth by the rays of the sun, that is to say, by the full splendour of the divine Super-Mind manifested in us. "And thou goest, O Savitri, to the three luminousnesses, and thou art perfectly expressed by the rays of the Sun (or, art gathered together by means of the rays)."

Then it is that the higher kingdom of the Immortality, Sachchidananda revealed, shines out perfectly in this world. The higher and lower are reconciled in the light of the supra-mental revelation. The Ignorance, the Night, is illumined upon both sides of our complete being, not only as in our present state upon one. This higher kingdom stands confessed in the principle of Beatitude which is for us the principle of Love and Light, represented by the god Mitra. The Lord of Truth, when he reveals himself in the full godhead, becomes the Lord of Bliss. The law of his being, the principle regulating his activities is seen to be Love; for in the right arrangement of knowledge and action everything here comes to be translated into terms of good, felicity, bliss. "And thou encompassest Night upon both sides, and thou becomest, O God, Mitra by the laws of thy action."

The Truth of the divine existence becomes eventually the sole Lord of all creation in ourselves; and by his constant visitations or by his continual progressions the Creator becomes the Increaser, Savitri becomes Pushan. He aggrandises us by a constantly progressive creation until he has illumined the whole world of our becoming. We grow into the complete, the universal, the infinite. So has Shyavashwa, of the sons of Atri, succeeded in affirming Savitri in his own being as the illuminative Truth, the creative, the progressive, the increaser of man — he who brings him out of egoistic limitation into universality, out of the finite into the infinite. "And thou hast power alone for creation; and thou becomest the Increaser, O God, by the goings; and thou illuminest entirely all this world (literally, becoming). Shyavashwa has attained to the affirmation of thee, O Savitri."

VI

The Divine Dawn

Rig Veda III.61

उषो वाजेन वाजिनि प्रचेताः स्तोमं जुषस्व गृणतो मघोनि ।
पुराणी देवि युवतिः पुरंधिरनु व्रतं चरसि विश्ववारे ॥१॥

1. Dawn, richly stored with substance, conscious cleave to the affirmation of him who expresses thee, O thou of the plenitudes. Goddess, ancient, yet ever young thou movest many-thoughted following the law of thy activities, O bearer of every boon.

उषो देव्यमर्त्या वि भाहि चन्द्ररथा सूनृता ईरयन्ती ।
आ त्वा वहन्तु सुयमासो अश्वा हिरण्यवर्णां पृथुपाजसो ये ॥२॥

2. Dawn divine, shine out immortal in thy car of happy light sending forth the pleasant voices of the Truth. May steeds well-guided bear thee here who are golden brilliant of hue and wide their might.

उषः प्रतीची भुवनानि विश्वोर्ध्वा तिष्ठस्यमृतस्य केतुः ।
समानमर्थं चरणीयमाना चक्रमिव नव्यस्या ववृत्स्व ॥३॥

3. Dawn, confronting all the worlds thou standest high-uplifted and art their perception of Immortality; do thou move over them like a wheel, O new Day, travelling over an equal field.

अव स्यूमेव चिन्वती मघोन्युषा याति स्वसरस्य पत्नी ।
स्वर्जनन्ती सुभगा सुदंसा आन्ताद्दिवः पप्रथ आ पृथिव्याः ॥४॥

4. Dawn in her plenitude like one that lets fall from her a sewn robe moves, the bride of the Bliss; creating Swar, perfect in her working, perfect in her enjoying, she widens from the extremity of Heaven over the earth.

अच्छा वो देवीमुषसं विभातीं प्र वो भरध्वं नमसा सुवृक्तिम् ।
ऊर्ध्वं मधुधा दिवि पाजो अश्रेत् प्र रोचना रुरुचे रण्वसंदृक् ॥ ५ ॥

5. Meet ye the Dawn as she shines wide towards you and with surrender bring forward your complete energy. Exalted in heaven is the force to which she rises establishing the sweetness; she makes the luminous worlds to shine forth and is a vision of felicity.

ऋतावरी दिवो अर्कैरबोध्या रेवती रोदसी चित्रमस्थात् ।
आयतीमग्न उषसं विभातीं वाममेषि द्रविणं भिक्षमाणः ॥ ६ ॥

6. By heaven's illuminings one perceives her a bearer of the Truth and rapturous she comes with its varied light into the two firmaments. From Dawn as she approaches shining out on thee, O Agni, thou seekest and attainest to the substance of delight.

ऋतस्य बुध्न उषसामिषण्यन् वृषा मही रोदसी आ विवेश ।
मही मित्रस्य वरुणस्य माया चन्द्रेव भानुं वि दधे पुरुत्रा ॥ ७ ॥

7. Putting forth his impulsions in the foundation of the Truth, in the foundation of the Dawns, their Lord enters the Vastness of the firmaments. Vast the wisdom of Varuna, of Mitra, as in a happy brightness, orders multitudinously the Light.

COMMENTARY

Surya Savitri in his task of illumination follows the progress of the Dawn. In another hymn the movements of the mind have been described as growing conscient and brilliant by the bright

power of the continuous Dawns. Throughout the Veda Usha, daughter of Heaven, has always the same function. She is the medium of the awakening, the activity and the growth of the other gods; she is the first condition of the Vedic realisation. By her increasing illumination the whole nature of man is clarified; through her he arrives at the Truth, through her he enjoys the Beatitude. The divine dawn of the Rishis is the advent of the divine Light throwing off veil after veil and revealing in man's activities the luminous godhead. In that light the Work is done, the sacrifice offered and its desirable fruits gathered by humanity.

Many are the hymns, indeed, in which rich and beautiful figures of the earthly dawn veil this inner truth of the goddess Usha, but in this hymn of the great Rishi Vishwamitra the psychological symbolism of the Vedic Dawn is apparent from beginning to end by open expressions and on the surface of the thought. "O Dawn rich of store in thy substance," he cries to her, "conscient cleave to the affirmation of him who expresses thee, O thou who hast the plenitudes." The word *pracetas* and the related word, *vicetas*, are standing terms of Vedic phraseology; they seem to correspond to the ideas expressed in later language by the Vedantic *prajñāna* and *vijñāna*. Prajnana is the consciousness that cognizes all things as objects confronting its observation; in the divine mind it is knowledge regarding things as their source, possessor and witness. Vijnana is comprehensive knowledge containing, penetrating into things, pervading them in consciousness by a sort of identification with their truth. Usha is to occupy the revealing thought and word of the Rishi as a power of Knowledge conscient of the truth of all that is placed by them before the mind for expression in man. The affirmation, it is suggested, will be full and ample; for Usha is *vājena vājini*, *maghoni*; rich is the store of her substance; she has all the plenitudes.

This dawn moves in her progression always according to the rule of a divine action; many are the thoughts she brings in that motion, but her steps are sure and all desirable things, all supreme boons, the boons of the Ananda, the blessings of the divine existence, — are in her hands. She is ancient and eternal,

the dawn of the Light that was from the beginning, *purāṇī*, but in her coming she is ever young and fresh to the soul that receives her.

She is to shine wide, she that is the divine Dawn, as the light of the immortal existence bringing out in man the powers or the voices of Truth and Joy, (*sūnṛtāḥ*, — a word which expresses at once both the true and the pleasant); for is not the chariot of her movement a car at once of light and of happiness? For again, the word *candra* in *candrarathā*, — signifying also the lunar deity Soma, lord of the delight of immortality pouring into man, *ānanda* and *amṛta*, — means both luminous and blissful. And the horses that bring her, figure of the nervous forces that support and carry forward all our action, must be perfectly controlled; golden, bright in hue, their nature (for in this ancient symbolism colour is the sign of quality, of character, of temperament) must be a dynamism of ideal knowledge in its concentrated luminousness; wide in its extension must be the mass of that concentrated force, — *pṛthupājaso ye*.

Divine Dawn comes thus to the soul with the light of her knowledge, *prajñāna*, confronting all the worlds as field of that knowledge, — all provinces, that is to say, of our universal being, — mind, vitality, physical consciousness. She stands uplifted over them on our heights above mind, in the highest heaven, as the perception of Immortality or of the Immortal, *amṛtasya ketuḥ*, revealing in them the eternal and beatific existence or the eternal all-blissful Godhead. So exalted she stands prepared to effect the motion of the divine knowledge, progressing as a new revelation of the eternal truth, *navyasi*, in their harmonised and equalised activities like a wheel moving smoothly over a level field; for they now, their diversities and discords removed, offer no obstacle to that equal motion.

In her plenitude she separates, as it were, and casts down from her the elaborately sewn garment that covered the truth of things and moves as the wife of the Lover, the energy of her all-blissful Lord, *svasarasya patnī*. Full in her enjoyment of the felicity, full in her effectuation of all activities, *subhagā sudaṁsāḥ*, she brings into existence in us by her revelations

Swar, the concealed luminous mind, our highest mental heaven; and thus from the farthest extremities of mental being extends herself over the physical consciousness.

As this divine Dawn pours out widely its light upon them, so have men by submission to the law of her divine act and movement to bring forward for her the fully energised completeness of their being and their capacities as a vehicle for her light or as a seat for her sacrificial activities.

The Rishi then dwells on the two capital works of the divine Dawn in man, — her elevation of him to the full force of the Light and the revelation of the Truth and her pouring of the Ananda, the Amrita, the Soma Wine, the bliss of the immortal being into the mental and bodily existence. In the world of the pure mind, *divi*, she rises into the full force and mass of the Light, *ūrdhvaṁ pājo aśret*, and from those pure and high levels she establishes the sweetness, *madhu*, the honey of Soma. She makes to shine out the three luminous worlds, *rocanā*; she is then or she brings with her the beatific vision. By the effectual illuminations of the pure mentality, through the realising Word, *divo arkaiḥ*, she is perceived as the bearer of Truth and with the Truth she enters from the world above Mind, full of the delight, in a varied play of her multiple thought and activity, into the mental and bodily consciousness, those established limits between which man's action moves. It is from her, as she comes thus richly laden, *vājena vājini*, that Agni, the divine Force labouring here in body and mind to uplift the mortal, prays for and attains to the Soma, the wine of the Beatitude, the delightful substance.

The supramental world in us, foundation of the Truth, is the foundation of the Dawns. They are the descent upon mortal nature of the light of that immortal Truth, *ṛtaṁ jyotis*. The Lord of the Dawns, Master of Truth, Illuminer, Creator, Organiser, putting forth in the foundation of Truth, above mind, the impulsion of his activities, enters with them by this goddess into a bodily and mental existence no longer obscured but released from their limits and capable of vastness, *mahī rodasī*. The Lord of Truth is the sole lord of things. He is Varuna, soul of vastness

and purity; he is Mitra, source of love and light and harmony. His creative Wisdom, *mahī mitrasya varuṇasya māyā*, unlimited in its scope, — for he is Varuna, — appearing, *candreva*, as a light of bliss and joy, — for he is Mitra, — arranges, perfectly organises, in multitudinous forms, in the wideness of the liberated nature, the luminous expansions, the serene expressions of the Truth. He combines the various brilliancies with which his Dawn has entered our firmaments; he blends into one harmony her true and happy voices.

Dawn divine is the coming of the Godhead. She is the light of the Truth and the Felicity pouring on us from the Lord of Wisdom and Bliss, *amṛtasya ketuḥ*, *svasarasya patnī*.

VII

To Bhaga Savitri, the Enjoyer

Rig Veda V.82

तत्सवितुर्वृणीमहे वयं देवस्य भोजनम् ।
श्रेष्ठं सर्वधातमं तुरं भगस्य धीमहि ॥१॥

1. Of Savitri divine we embrace that enjoying, that which is the best, rightly disposes all, reaches the goal, even Bhaga's, we hold by the thought.

अस्य हि स्वयशस्तरं सवितुः कच्चन प्रियम् ।
न मिनन्ति स्वराज्यम् ॥२॥

2. For of him no pleasure in things can they diminish, for too self-victorious is it, nor the self-empire of this Enjoyer.

स हि रत्नानि दाशुषे सुवाति सविता भगः ।
तं भागं चित्रमीमहे ॥३॥

3. 'Tis he that sends forth the delights on the giver, the god who is the bringer forth of things; that varied richness of his enjoyment we seek.

अद्या नो देव सवितः प्रजावत्सावीः सौभगम् ।
परा दुःष्वप्न्यं सुव ॥४॥

4. Today, O divine Producer, send forth on us fruitful felicity, dismiss what belongs to the evil dream.

विश्वानि देव सवितर्दुरितानि परा सुव ।
यद् भद्रं तन्न आसुव ॥५॥

5. All evils, O divine Producer, dismiss; what is good, that send forth on us.

अनागसो अदितये देवस्य सवितुः सवे ।
विश्वा वामानि धीमहि ॥ ६॥

6. Blameless for infinite being in the outpouring of the divine Producer, we hold by the thought all things of delight.

आ विश्वदेवं सत्पतिं सूक्तैरद्या वृणीमहे ।
सत्यसवं सवितारम् ॥ ७॥

7. The universal godhead and master of being we accept into ourselves by perfect words today, the Producer whose production is of the truth —

य इमे उभे अहनी पुर एत्यप्रयुच्छन् ।
स्वाधीर्देवः सविता ॥ ८॥

8. He who goes in front of both this day and night never faltering, placing rightly his thought, the divine Producer —

य इमा विश्वा जातान्याश्रावयति श्लोकेन ।
प्र च सुवाति सविता ॥ ९॥

9. He who by the rhythm makes heard of the knowledge all births and produces them, the divine Producer.

COMMENTARY

Four great deities constantly appear in the Veda as closely allied in their nature and in their action, Varuna, Mitra, Bhaga, Aryaman. Varuna and Mitra are continually coupled together in the thoughts of the Rishis; sometimes a trio appears together, Varuna, Mitra and Bhaga or Varuna, Mitra and Aryaman. Separate *sūktas* addressed to any of these godheads are comparatively

rare, although there are some important hymns of which Varuna is the deity. But the Riks in which their names occur, whether in hymns to other gods or in invocations to the All-gods, the *Viśve Devāḥ*, are by no means inconsiderable in number.

These four deities are, according to Sayana, solar powers, Varuna negatively as lord of the night, Mitra positively as lord of the day, Bhaga and Aryaman as names of the Sun. We need not attach much importance to these particular identifications, but it is certain that a solar character attaches to all the four. In them that peculiar feature of the Vedic gods, their essential oneness even in the play of their different personalities and functions, comes prominently to light. Not only are the four closely associated among themselves, but they seem to partake of each other's nature and attributes, and all are evidently emanations of Surya Savitri, the divine being in his creative and illuminative solar form.

Surya Savitri is the Creator. According to the Truth of things, in the terms of the Ritam, the worlds are brought forth from the divine consciousness, from Aditi, goddess of infinite being, mother of the gods, the indivisible consciousness, the Light that cannot be impaired imaged by the mystic Cow that cannot be slain. In that creation, Varuna and Mitra, Aryaman and Bhaga are four effective Puissances. Varuna represents the principle of pure and wide being, Sat in Sachchidananda; Aryaman represents the light of the divine consciousness working as Force; Mitra representing light and knowledge, using the principle of Ananda for creation, is Love maintaining the law of harmony; Bhaga represents Ananda as the creative enjoyment; he takes the delight of the creation, takes the delight of all that is created. It is the Maya, the formative wisdom of Varuna, of Mitra that disposes multitudinously the light of Aditi brought by the Dawn to manifest the worlds.

In their psychological function these four gods represent the same principles working in the human mind, in the human temperament. They build up in man the different planes of his being and mould them ultimately into the terms and the forms of the divine Truth. Especially Mitra and Varuna are continually

described as holding firm the law of their action, increasing the Truth, touching the Truth and by the Truth enjoying its vastness of divine will or its great and uncontracted sacrificial action. Varuna represents largeness, right and purity; everything that deviates from the right, from the purity recoils from his being and strikes the offender as the punishment of sin. So long as man does not attain to the largeness of Varuna's Truth, he is bound to the posts of the world-sacrifice by the triple bonds of mind, life and body as a victim and is not free as a possessor and enjoyer. Therefore we have frequently the prayer to be delivered from the noose of Varuna, from the wrath of his offended purity. Mitra is on the other hand the most beloved of the gods; he binds all together by the fixities of his harmony, by the successive lustrous seats of Love fulfilling itself in the order of things, *mitrasya dhāmabhiḥ*. His name, Mitra, which means also friend, is constantly used with a play upon the double sense; it is as Mitra, because Mitra dwells in all, that the other gods become the friends of man. Aryaman appears in the Veda with but little distinctness of personality, for the references to him are brief. The functions of Bhaga are outlined more clearly and are the same in the cosmos and in man.

In this hymn of Shyavashwa to Savitri we see both the functions of Bhaga and his oneness with Surya Savitri; for it is to the creative Lord of Truth that the hymn is addressed, to Surya, but to Surya specifically in his form as Bhaga, as the Lord of Enjoyment. The word *bhaga* means enjoyment or the enjoyer and that this sense is the one held especially appropriate to the divine name, Bhaga, is emphasised by the use of *bhojanam*, *bhāga*, *saubhagam* in the verses of the hymn. Savitri, we have seen, means Creator, but especially in the sense of producing, emitting from the unmanifest and bringing out into the manifest. Throughout the hymn there is a constant dwelling upon this root-sense of the word which it is impossible to render adequately in a translation. In the very first verse there is a covert play of the kind; for *bhojanam* means both enjoyment and food and it is intended to be conveyed that the "enjoyment of Savitri" is Soma, from the same root *su*, to produce, press

out, distil, Soma, the food of divine beings, the supreme distilling, highest production of the great Producer. What the Rishi seeks is the enjoyment in all created things of the immortal and immortalising Ananda.

It is this Ananda which is that enjoyment of the divine Producer, of Surya Savitri, the supreme result of the Truth; for Truth is followed as the path to the divine beatitude. This Ananda is the highest, the best enjoyment. It disposes all aright; for once the Ananda, the divine delight in all things is attained, it sets right all the distortions, all the evil of the world. It carries man through to the goal. If by the truth and right of things we arrive at the Ananda, by the Ananda also we can arrive at the right and truth of things. It is to the divine Creator in the name and form of Bhaga that this human capacity for the divine and right enjoyment of all things belongs. When he is embraced by the human mind and heart and vital forces and physical being, when this divine form is received into himself by man, then the Ananda of the world manifests itself.

Nothing can limit, nothing can diminish, neither god nor demon, friend nor enemy, event nor sensation, whatever pleasure this divine Enjoyer takes in things, in whatever vessel or object of his enjoyment. For nothing can diminish or hedge in or hurt his luminous self-empire, *svarājyam*, his perfect possession of himself in infinite being, infinite delight and the vastnesses of the order of the Truth.

Therefore it is he that brings the seven delights, *sapta ratnā*, to the giver of the sacrifice. He looses them forth on us; for they are all there in the world as in the divine being, in ourselves also, and have only to be loosed forth on our outer consciousness. The rich and varied amplitude of this sevenfold delight, perfect on all the planes of our being, is the *bhāga*, enjoyment or portion of Bhaga Savitri in the completed sacrifice, and it is that varied wealth which the Rishi seeks for himself and his fellows in the sacrifice by the acceptance of the divine Enjoyer.

Shyavashwa then calls on Bhaga Savitri to vouchsafe to him even today a felicity not barren, but full of the fruits of activity, rich in the offspring of the soul, *prajāvat saubhagam*. Ananda is

creative, it is *jana*, the delight that gives birth to life and world; only let the things loosed forth on us be of the creation conceived in the terms of the truth and let all that belongs to the falsehood, to the evil dream created by the ignorance of the divine Truth, *duḥṣvapnyam*, be dismissed, dispelled away from our conscious being.

In the next verse he makes clearer the sense of *duḥṣvapnyam*. What he desires to be dispelled is all evil, *viśvāni duritāni*. *Suvitam* and *duritam* in the Veda mean literally right going and wrong going. *Suvitam* is truth of thought and action, *duritam* error or stumbling, sin and perversion. *Suvitam* is happy going, felicity, the path of Ananda; *duritam* is calamity, suffering, all ill result of error and ill doing. All that is evil, *viśvāni duritāni*, belongs to the evil dream that has to be turned away from us. Bhaga sends to us instead all that is good, — *bhadram*, good in the sense of felicity, the auspicious things of the divine enjoying, the happiness of the right activity, the right creation.

For, in the creation of Bhaga Savitri, in his perfect and faultless sacrifice, — there is a double sense in the word *sava*, "loosing forth", used of the creation, and the sacrifice, the libation of the Soma, — men stand absolved from sin and blame by the Ananda, *anāgaso*, blameless in the sight of Aditi, fit for the undivided and infinite consciousness of the liberated soul. The Ananda owing to that freedom is capable of being in them universal. They are able to hold by their thought all things of the delight, *viśvā vāmāni*; for in the *dhī*, the understanding that holds and arranges, there is right arrangement of the world, perception of right relation, right purpose, right use, right fulfilment, the divine and blissful intention in all things.

It is the universal Divine, the master of the Sat, from whom all things are created in the terms of the truth, *satyam*, that the sacrificers today by means of the sacred *mantras* seek to accept into themselves under the name of Bhaga Savitri. It is the creator whose creation is the Truth, whose sacrifice is the outpouring of the truth through the outpouring of his own Ananda, his divine and unerring joy of being, into the human soul. He as Surya Savitri, master of the Truth, goes in front of both this Night

and this Dawn, of the manifest consciousness and the unmanifest, the waking being and the subconscient and superconscient whose interaction creates all our experiences; and in his motion he neglects nothing, is never unheeding, never falters. He goes in front of both bringing out of the night of the subconscient the divine Light, turning into the beams of that Light the uncertain or distorted reflections of the conscient, and always the thought is rightly placed. The source of all error is misapplication, wrong placing of truth, wrong arrangement, wrong relation, wrong positing in time and place, object and order. But in the Master of Truth there is no such error, no such stumbling, no such wrong placing.

Surya Savitri, who is Bhaga, stands between the Infinite and the created worlds within us and without. All things that have to be born in the creative consciousness he receives into the Vijnana; there he puts it into its right place in the divine rhythm by the knowledge that listens and receives the Word as it descends and so he looses it forth into the movement of things, *āśrāvayati ślokena pra ca suvāti.* When in us each creation of the active Ananda, the *prajāvat saubhagam*, comes thus out of the unmanifest, received and heard rightly of the knowledge in the faultless rhythm of things, then is our creation that of Bhaga Savitri, and all the births of that creation, our children, our offspring, *prajā*, *apatyam*, are things of the delight, *viśvā vāmāni*. This is the accomplishment of Bhaga in man, his full portion of the world-sacrifice.

VIII

Vayu, the Master of the Life Energies

Rig Veda IV.48

विहि होत्रा अवीता विपो न रायो अर्यः ।
वायवा चन्द्रेण रथेन याहि सुतस्य पीतये ॥ १॥

1. Do thou manifest the sacrificial energies that are unmanifested, even as a revealer of felicity and doer of the work; O Vayu, come in thy car of happy light to the drinking of the Soma wine.

निर्युवाणो अशस्तीर्नियुत्वाँ इन्द्रसारथिः ।
वायवा चन्द्रेण रथेन याहि सुतस्य पीतये ॥ २॥

2. Put away from thee all denials of expression and with thy steeds of the yoking, with Indra for thy charioteer come, O Vayu, in thy car of happy light to the drinking of the Soma wine.

अनु कृष्णे वसुधिती येमाते विश्वपेशसा ।
वायवा चन्द्रेण रथेन याहि सुतस्य पीतये ॥ ३॥

3. The two that, dark, yet hold all substances, shall observe thee in their labour, they in whom are all forms. O Vayu, come in thy car of happy light to the drinking of the Soma wine.

वहन्तु त्वा मनोयुजो युक्तासो नवतिर्नव ।
वायवा चन्द्रेण रथेन याहि सुतस्य पीतये ॥ ४॥

4. Yoked let the ninety and nine bear thee, they who are yoked by the mind. O Vayu, come in thy car of happy light to the drinking of the Soma wine.

वायो शतं हरीणां युवस्व पोष्याणाम् ।
उत वा ते सहस्रिणो रथ आ यातु पाजसा ॥ ५ ॥

5. Yoke, O Vayu, thy hundred brilliant steeds that shall increase, or else with thy thousand let thy chariot arrive in the mass of its force.

COMMENTARY

The psychological conceptions of the Vedic Rishis have often a marvellous profundity and nowhere more than when they deal with the phenomenon of the conscious activities of mind and life emerging out of the subconscient. It may be said, even, that this idea is the whole basis of the rich and subtle philosophy evolved in that early dawn of knowledge by these inspired Mystics. Nor has any other expressed it with a greater subtlety and felicity than the Rishi Vamadeva, at once one of the most profound seers and one of the sweetest singers of the Vedic age. One of his hymns, the last of the fourth Mandala, is indeed the most important key we possess to the symbolism which hid behind the figures of the sacrifice those realities of psychological experience and perception deemed so sacred by the Aryan forefathers.

In that hymn Vamadeva speaks of the ocean of the subconscient which underlies all our life and activities. Out of that ocean rises "the honeyed wave" of sensational existence with its undelivered burden of unrealised delight climbing full of the "Ghrita" and the "Soma", the clarified mental consciousness and the illumined Ananda that descends from above, to the heaven of Immortality. The "secret Name" of the mental consciousness, the tongue with which the gods taste the world, the nexus of Immortality, is the Ananda which the Soma symbolises. For all this creation has been, as it were, ejected into the subconscient by the four-horned Bull, the divine Purusha whose

horns are infinite Existence, Consciousness, Bliss and Truth. In images of an energetic incongruity reminding us of the sublime grotesques and strange figures that have survived from the old mystic and symbolic art of the prehistoric world, Vamadeva describes the Purusha in the figure of a man-bull, whose four horns are the four divine principles, his three feet or three legs the three human principles, mentality, vital dynamism and material substance, his two heads the double consciousness of Soul and Nature, Purusha and Prakriti, his seven hands the seven natural activities corresponding to the seven principles. "Triply bound" — bound in the mind, bound in the life-energies, bound in the body — "the Bull roars aloud; great is the Divinity that has entered into mortals."

For the "ghritam", the clear light of the mentality reflecting the Truth, has been hidden by the Panis, the lords of the lower sense-activity, and shut up in the subconscient; in our thoughts, in our desires, in our physical consciousness the Light and the Ananda have been triply established, but they are concealed from us. It is in the cow, symbol of the Light from above, that the gods find the clarified streams of the "ghritam". These streams, says the Rishi, rise from the heart of things, from the ocean of the subconscient, *hṛdyāt samudrāt*, but they are confined in a hundred pens by the enemy, Vritra, so that they may be kept from the eye of discernment, from the knowledge that labours in us to enlighten that which is concealed and deliver that which is imprisoned. They move in the path on the borders of the subconscient, dense if impetuous in their movements, limited by the nervous action, in small formations of the life-energy Vayu, *vātapramiyaḥ*. Purified progressively by the experiences of the conscious heart and mind, these energies of Nature become finally capable of the marriage with Agni, the divine Will-force, which breaks down their boundaries and is himself nourished by their now abundant waves. That is the crisis of the being by which the mortal nature prepares its conversion to immortality.

In the last verse of the hymn Vamadeva describes the whole of existence as established above in the seat of the divine Purusha, below in the ocean of the subconscient and in the Life,

antaḥ samudre hṛdi antar āyuṣi. The conscious mind is, then, the channel through which there is communication between the upper ocean and the lower, between superconscient and subconscient, the light divine and the original darkness of Nature.

Vayu is the Lord of Life. By the ancient Mystics life was considered to be a great force pervading all material existence and the condition of all its activities. It is this idea that was formulated later on in the conception of the Prana, the universal breath of life. All the vital and nervous activities of the human being fall within the definition of Prana, and belong to the domain of Vayu. Yet this great deity has comparatively few hymns to his share in the Rig Veda and even in those Suktas in which he is prominently invoked, does not usually figure alone but in company with others and as if dependent on them. He is especially coupled with Indra and it would almost seem as if for the functionings demanded from him by the Vedic Rishis he needed the aid of the superior deity. When there is question of the divine action of the Life-forces in man, Agni in the form of the Vedic Horse, Ashwa, Dadhikravan, takes usually the place of Vayu.

If we consider the fundamental ideas of the Rishis, this position of Vayu becomes intelligible. The illumination of the lower being by the higher, the mortal by the divine, was their principal concept. Light and Force, Go and Ashwa, the Cow and the Horse, were the object of the sacrifice. Force was the condition, Light the liberating agency; and Indra and Surya were the chief bringers of Light. Moreover the Force required was the divine Will taking possession of all the human energies and revealing itself in them; and of this Will, this force of conscious energy taking possession of the nervous vitality and revealing itself in it, Agni more than Vayu and especially Agni Dadhikravan was the symbol. For it is Agni who is master of Tapas, the divine Consciousness formulating itself in universal energy, of which the Prana is only a representative in the lower being. Therefore in Vamadeva's hymn, the fifty-eighth of the fourth Mandala, it is Indra and Surya and Agni who effect the great manifestation of the conscious divinity out of the subconscient. Vata or Vayu,

the nervous activity, is only a first condition of the emergent Mind. And for man it is the meeting of Life with Mind and the support given by the former to the evolution of the latter which is the important aspect of Vayu. Therefore we find Indra, Master of Mind, and Vayu, Master of Life, coupled together and the latter always somewhat dependent on the former; the Maruts, the thought-forces, although in their origin they seem to be as much powers of Vayu as of Indra, are more important to the Rishis than Vayu himself and even in their dynamic aspect are more closely associated with Agni Rudra than with the natural chief of the legions of the Air.

The present hymn, the forty-eighth of the Mandala, is the last of three in which Vamadeva invokes Indra and Vayu for the drinking of the Soma-wine. They are called in conjointly as the two lords of brilliant force, *śavasaspatī*, as in another hymn, in a former Mandala, they are invoked as lords of thought, *dhiyaspatī*. Indra is the master of mental force, Vayu of nervous or vital force and their union is necessary for thought and for action. They are invited to come in one common chariot and drink together of the wine of the Ananda which brings with it the divinising energies. Vayu, it is said, has the right of the first draught; for it is the supporting vital forces that must first become capable of the ecstasy of the divine action.

In the third hymn, in which the result of the sacrifice is defined, Vayu is alone invoked, but even so his companionship with Indra is clearly indicated. He is to come in a chariot of happy brightness, like Usha in another hymn, to drink of the immortalising wine.[1] The chariot symbolises movement of energy and it is a glad movement of already illuminated vital energies that is invoked in the form of Vayu. The divine utility of this brightly happy movement is indicated in the first three verses.

The god is to manifest — he is to bring into the light of the conscious activity sacrificial energies which are not yet manifested,[2] are yet hidden in the darkness of the subconscient. In

1 *Vāyavā candreṇa rathena yāhi sutasya pītaye.*
2 *Vihi hotrā avītā.*

the ritualistic interpretation the phrase may be translated, "Eat of offerings that have not been eaten" or, in another sense of the verb *vī*, it may be rendered "Arrive at sacrificial energies which have never been approached"; but all these renderings amount, symbolically, to the same psychological sense. Powers and activities that have not yet been called up out of the subconscient, have to be liberated from its secret cave by the combined action of Indra and Vayu and devoted to the work.

For it is not towards an ordinary action of the nervous mentality that they are called. Vayu is to manifest these energies as would "a revealer of the felicity, a doer of the Aryan work", *vipo na rāyo aryaḥ*. These words sufficiently indicate the nature of the energies that are to be evoked. It is possible, however, that the phrase may have a covert reference to Indra and thus indicate what is afterwards clearly expressed, the necessity that Vayu's action should be governed by the illumined and aspiring force of the more brilliant god. For it is Indra's enlightenment that leads to the secret of beatitude being revealed and he is the first labourer in the Work. To Indra, Agni and Surya among the gods is especially applied the term *arya*, which describes with an untranslatable compactness those who rise to the noble aspiration and who do the great labour as an offering in order to arrive at the good and the bliss.

In the second verse the necessity of Indra's guidance is affirmed expressly. Vayu is to come putting away all denials that may be opposed to the manifestation of the unmanifested, *niryuvāṇo aśastīḥ*. The word *aśastīḥ* means literally "not-expressings" and describes the detention by obscuring powers like Vritra of the light and power that are waiting to be revealed, ready to be called out into expression through the influence of the gods and by the instrumentality of the Word. The Word is the power that expresses, *śastram*, *gir*, *vacas*. But it has to be protected and given its right effect by the divine Powers. Vayu is to do this office; he has to expel all powers of denial, of obscuration, of non-manifestation. To do this work he must arrive "with his steeds of the yoking and Indra for charioteer", *niyutvān indrasārathiḥ*. The steeds of Indra, of

Vayu, of Surya have each their appropriate name. Indra's horses are *hari* or *babhru*, red gold or tawny yellow; Surya's *harit*, indicating a more deep, full and intense luminousness; Vayu's are *niyut*, steeds of the yoking, for they represent those dynamic movements which yoke the energy to its action. But although they are the horses of Vayu, they have to be driven by Indra, the movements of the Master of nervous and vital energy guided by the Master of mind.

The third verse[3] would seem at first to bring in an unconnected idea; it speaks of a dark Heaven and Earth with all their forms obeying or following in their labour the movements of Vayu in his Indra-driven car. They are not mentioned by name but described as the two black or dark holders of substance or holders of wealth, *vasudhitī*; but the latter word sufficiently indicates earth and by implication of the dual form Heaven also, its companion. We must note that it is not Heaven the father and Earth the mother that are indicated, but the two sisters, Rodasi, feminine forms of heaven and earth, who symbolise the general energies of the mental and physical consciousness. It is their dark states — the obscured consciousness between its two limits of the mental and the physical, — which by the happy movement of the nervous dynamism begin to labour in accordance with the movement or under the control of Vayu and to yield up their hidden forms; for all forms are concealed in them and they must be compelled to reveal them. Thus we discover that this verse completes the sense of the two that precede. For always when the Veda is properly understood, its verses are seen to unroll the thought with a profound logical coherence and pregnant succession.

The two remaining riks indicate the result produced by this action of Heaven and Earth and by their yielding up of hidden forms and unmanifested energies on the movement of Vayu as his car gallops towards the Ananda. First of all his horses are to attain their normally complete general number. "Let the ninety-

[3] *Anu kṛṣṇe vasudhitī yemāte viśvapeśasā.*

nine be yoked and bear thee, those that are yoked by the mind."[4] The constantly recurring numbers ninety-nine, a hundred and a thousand have a symbolic significance in the Veda which it is very difficult to disengage with any precision. The secret is perhaps to be found in the multiplication of the mystic number seven by itself and its double repetition with a unit added before and at the end, making altogether 1+49+49+1=100. Seven is the number of essential principles in manifested Nature, the seven forms of divine consciousness at play in the world. Each, formulated severally, contains the other six in itself; thus the full number is forty-nine, and to this is added the unit above out of which all develops, giving us altogether a scale of fifty and forming the complete gamut of active consciousness. But there is also its duplication by an ascending and descending series, the descent of the gods, the ascent of man. This gives us ninety-nine, the number variously applied in the Veda to horses, cities, rivers, in each case with a separate but kindred symbolism. If we add an obscure unit below into which all descends to the luminous unit above towards which all ascends we have the full scale of one hundred.

It is therefore a complex energy of consciousness which is to be the result of Vayu's movement; it is the emergence of the fullest movement of the mental activity now only latent and potential in man, — the ninety and nine steeds that are yoked by the mind. And in the next verse the culminating unit is added. We have a hundred horses, and because the action is now that of complete luminous mentality, these steeds, though they still carry Vayu and Indra, are no longer merely *niyut*, but *hari*, the colour of Indra's brilliant bays.[5] "Yoke, O Vayu, a hundred of the brilliant ones, that are to be increased."

But why to be increased? Because a hundred represents the general fullness of the variously combined movements, but not their utter complexity. Each of the hundred can be multiplied by ten; all can be increased in their own kind: for that is the nature

[4] *Vahantu tvā manoyujo yuktāso navatir nava.*
[5] *Vāyo śataṁ harīṇāṁ yuvasva poṣyāṇām.*

of the increase indicated by the word *poṣyāṇām*. Therefore, says the Rishi, either come with the general fullness of the hundred to be afterwards nourished into their full complexity of a hundred tens or, if thou wilt, come at once with thy thousand and let thy movement arrive in the utter mass of its entire potential energy.[6] It is the completely varied all-ensphering, all-energising mental illumination with its full perfection of being, power, bliss, knowledge, mentality, vital force, physical activity that he desires. For, this attained, the subconscient is compelled to yield up all its hidden possibilities at the will of the perfected mind for the rich and abundant movement of the perfected life.

[6] *Uta vā te sahasriṇo ratha ā yātu pājasā.*

IX

Brihaspati, Power of the Soul

Rig Veda IV.50

यस्तस्तम्भ सहसा वि ज्मो अन्तान् बृहस्पतिस्त्रिषधस्थो रवेण ।
तं प्रत्नास ऋषयो दीध्यानाः पुरो विप्रा दधिरे मन्द्रजिह्वम् ॥ १ ॥

1. He who established in his might the extremities of the earth, Brihaspati, in the triple world of our fulfilment, by his cry, on him the pristine sages meditated and, illumined, set him in their front with his tongue of ecstasy.

धुनेतयः सुप्रकेतं मदन्तो बृहस्पते अभि ये नस्ततस्रे ।
पृषन्तं सृप्रमदब्धमूर्वं बृहस्पते रक्षतादस्य योनिम् ॥ २ ॥

2. They, O Brihaspati, vibrating with the impulse of their movement, rejoicing in perfected consciousness wove for us abundant, rapid, invincible, wide, the world from which this being was born. That do thou protect, O Brihaspati.

बृहस्पते या परमा परावदत आ त ऋतस्पृशो नि षेदुः ।
तुभ्यं खाता अवता अद्रिदुग्धा मध्वः श्चोतन्त्यभितो विरप्शम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. O Brihaspati, that which is the highest supreme of existence, thither from this world they attain and take their seat who touch the Truth. For thee are dug the wells of honey which drain this hill and their sweetnesses stream out on every side and break into overflowing.

बृहस्पतिः प्रथमं जायमानो महो ज्योतिषः परमे व्योमन् ।
सप्तास्यस्तुविजातो रवेण वि सप्तरश्मिरधमत् तमांसि ॥ ४ ॥

4. Brihaspati first in his birth from the vast light, in the highest heavenly space, with his seven fronts, with his seven rays, with his many births, drives utterly away the darknesses that encompass us with his cry.

स सुष्टुभा स ऋक्वता गणेन वलं रुरोज फलिगं रवेण ।
बृहस्पतिरुस्रिया हव्यसूदः कनिक्रदद् वावशतीरुदाजत् ॥ ५ ॥

5. He with his cohort of the rhythm that affirms, of the chant that illumines has broken Vala into pieces with his cry. Brihaspati drives upward the Bright Ones who speed our offerings; he shouts aloud as he leads them, lowing they reply.

एवा पित्रे विश्वदेवाय वृष्णे यज्ञैर्विधेम नमसा हविर्भिः ।
बृहस्पते सुप्रजा वीरवन्तो वयं स्याम पतयो रयीणाम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. Thus to the Father, the universal Godhead, the Bull of the herds, may we dispose our sacrifices and submission and oblations; O Brihaspati, full of energy and rich in offspring may we become masters of the felicities.

स इद् राजा प्रतिजन्यानि विश्वा शुष्मेण तस्थावभि वीर्येण ।
बृहस्पतिं यः सुभृतं बिभर्ति वल्गूयति वन्दते पूर्वभाजम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. Verily is he King and conquers by his energy, by his heroic force all that is in the worlds that confront him, who bears Brihaspati in him well-contained and has the exultant dance and adores and gives him the first fruits of his enjoyment.

स इत् क्षेति सुधित ओकसि स्वे तस्मा इळा पिन्वते विश्वदानीम् ।
तस्मै विशः स्वयमेवा नमन्ते यस्मिन् ब्रह्मा राजनि पूर्व एति ॥ ८ ॥

8. Yea, he dwells firmly seated in his proper home and for him Ila at all times grows in richness. To him all creatures of themselves submit, the King, he in whom the Soul-Power goes in front.

अप्रतीतो जयति सं धनानि प्रतिजन्यान्युत या सजन्या ।
अवस्यवे यो वरिवः कृणोति ब्रह्मणे राजा तमवन्ति देवाः ॥ ९ ॥

9. None can assail him, he conquers utterly all the riches of the worlds which confront him and the world in which he dwells; he who for the Soul-Power that seeks its manifestation creates in himself that highest good, is cherished by the gods.

इन्द्रश्च सोमं पिबतं बृहस्पतेऽस्मिन् यज्ञे मन्दसाना वृषण्वसू ।
आ वां विशन्त्विन्दवः स्वाभुवोऽस्मे रयिं सर्ववीरं नि यच्छतम् ॥ १० ॥

10. Thou, O Brihaspati, and Indra, drink the Soma-wine rejoicing in this sacrifice, lavishing substance. Let the powers of its delight enter into you and take perfect form, control in us a felicity full of every energy.

बृहस्पत इन्द्र वर्धतं नः सचा सा वां सुमतिर्भूत्वस्मे ।
अविष्टं धियो जिगृतं पुरन्धीर्जजस्तमर्यो वनुषामरातीः ॥ ११ ॥

11. O Brihaspati, O Indra, increase in us together and may that your perfection of mind be created in us; foster the thoughts, bring out the mind's multiple powers; destroy all poverties that they bring who seek to conquer the Aryan.

COMMENTARY

Brihaspati, Brahmanaspati, Brahma are the three names of the god to whom the Rishi Vamadeva addresses this mystic hymn of praise. In the later Puranic theogonies Brihaspati and Brahma have long become separate deities. Brahma is the Creator, one of the Three who form the great Puranic Trinity; Brihaspati is a figure of no great importance, spiritual teacher of the gods, and incidentally guardian of the planet Jupiter; Brahmanaspati, the middle term which once linked the two, has disappeared. To restore the physiognomy of the Vedic deity we have to reunite what has been disjoined and correct the values of the two

separated terms in the light of the original Vedic conceptions.

Brahman in the Veda signifies ordinarily the Vedic Word or mantra in its profoundest aspect as the expression of the intuition arising out of the depths of the soul or being. It is a voice of the rhythm which has created the worlds and creates perpetually. All world is expression or manifestation, creation by the Word. Conscious Being luminously manifesting its contents in itself, of itself, *tmanā*, is the superconscient; holding its contents obscurely in itself it is the subconscient. The higher, the self-luminous descends into the obscure, into the night, into darkness concealed in darkness, *tamas tamasā gūḍham*, where all is hidden in formless being owing to fragmentation of consciousness, *tucchyenābhvapihitam*. It arises again out of the Night by the Word to reconstitute in the conscient its vast unity, *tan mahinājāyataikam*. This vast Being, this all-containing and all-formulating consciousness is Brahman. It is the Soul that emerges out of the subconscient in Man and rises towards the superconscient. And the word of creative Power welling upward out of the soul is also *brahman*.

The Divine, the Deva, manifests itself as conscious Power of the soul, creates the worlds by the Word out of the waters of the subconscient, *apraketaṁ salilaṁ sarvam*, — the inconscient ocean that was this all, as it is plainly termed in the great Hymn of Creation. This power of the Deva is Brahma, the stress in the name falling more upon the conscious soul-power than upon the Word which expresses it. The manifestation of the different world-planes in the conscient human being culminates in the manifestation of the superconscient, the Truth and the Bliss, and this is the office of the supreme Word or Veda. Of this supreme word Brihaspati is the master, the stress in this name falling upon the potency of the Word rather than upon the thought of the general soul-power which is behind it. Brihaspati gives the Word of knowledge, the rhythm of expression of the superconscient, to the gods and especially to Indra, the lord of Mind, when they work in man as "Aryan" powers for the great consummation. It is easy to see how these conceptions came to be specialised in the broader, but less subtle and profound Puranic symbolism into

Brahma, the Creator, and Brihaspati, the teacher of the gods. In the name, Brahmanaspati, the two varying stresses are unified and equalised. It is the link-name between the general and the special aspects of the same deity.

Brihaspati is he who has established firmly the limits and definitions of the Earth, that is to say of the material consciousness. The existence out of which all formations are made is an obscure, fluid and indeterminate movement, — *salilam*, Water. The first necessity is to create a sufficiently stable formation out of this flux and running so as to form a basis for the life of the conscient. This Brihaspati does in the formation of the physical consciousness and its world, *sahasā*, by force, by a sort of mighty constraint upon the resistance of the subconscient. This great creation he effects by establishing the triple principle of mind, life and body, always present together and involved in each other or evolved out of each other in the world of the cosmic labour and fulfilment. The three together form the triple seat of Agni and there he works out the gradual work of accomplishment or perfection which is the object of the sacrifice. Brihaspati forms by sound, by his cry, *raveṇa*, for the Word is the cry of the soul as it awakens to ever-new perceptions and formations. "He who established firmly by force the ends of the earth, Brihaspati in the triple seat of the fulfilment, by his cry."[1]

On him, it is said, the ancient or pristine Rishis meditated; meditating, they became illumined in mind; illumined, they set him in front as the god of the ecstatic tongue, *mandrajihvam*, the tongue that takes joy of the intoxicating wine of Soma, *mada*, *madhu*, of that which is the wave of sweetness, *madhumān ūrmiḥ*, hidden in the conscient existence and out of it progressively delivered.[2] But of whom is there question? The seven divine Rishis, *ṛṣayo divyāḥ*, who fulfilling consciousness in each of its seven principles and harmonising them together superintend the evolution of the world, or the human fathers, *pitaro manuṣyāḥ*, who first discovered the higher knowledge

1 *Yas tastambha sahasā vi jmo antān, bṛhaspatis triṣadhastho raveṇa.*
2 *Taṁ pratnāsa ṛṣayo dīdhyānāḥ, puro viprā dadhire mandrajihvam.*

and formulated for man the infinity of the Truth-consciousness? Either may be intended, but the reference seems to be rather to the conquest of the Truth by the human fathers, the Ancients. The word *dīdhyāna* in the Veda means both shining, becoming luminous, and thinking, meditating, fixing in the thought. It is constantly being used with the peculiar Vedic figure of a double or complex sense. In the first sense it must be connected with *viprāḥ*, and the suggestion is that the Rishis became more and more luminous in thought by the triumphant force of Brihaspati until they grew into Illuminates, *viprāḥ*. In the second it is connected with *dadhire* and suggests that the Rishis, meditating on the intuitions that rise up from the soul with the cry of Brihaspati in the sacred and enlightening Word, holding them firmly in the thought, became illuminated in mind, open to the full inflow of the superconscient. They were thus able to bring into the front of the conscious being that activity of the soul-thoughts which works usually in the background, veiled, and to make it the leading activity of their nature. As a result Brihaspati in them became able to taste for them the bliss of existence, the wine of Immortality, the supreme Ananda. The formation of the definite physical consciousness is the first step, this awakening to the Ananda by the bringing forward in mind of the intuitive soul as the leader of our conscious activities is the consummation or, at least, the condition of the consummation.

The result is the formation of the Truth-consciousness in man. The ancient Rishis attained to the most rapid vibration of the movement; the most full and swift streaming of the flux of consciousness which constitutes our active existence, no longer obscure as in the subconscient, but full of the joy of perfected consciousness, — not *apraketam* like the Ocean described in the Hymn of Creation, but *supraketam*. Thus they are described, *dhunetayaḥ supraketaṁ madantaḥ*. With this attainment of the full rapidity of the activities of consciousness unified with its full light and bliss in the human mentality they have woven for the race by the web of these rapid, luminous and joyous perceptions the Truth-consciousness, Ritam Brihat, which is the womb or birth-place of this conscient being. For it is out of the

superconscient that existence descends into the subconscient and carries with it that which emerges here as the individual human being, the conscious soul. The nature of this Truth-consciousness is in itself this that it is abundant in its outflowings, *pṛṣantam*, or, it may be, many-coloured in the variety of its harmonised qualities; it is rapid in its motion, *sṛpram*; by that luminous rapidity it triumphs over all that seeks to quell or break it, it is *adabdham*; above all it is wide, vast, infinite, *ūrvam*. In all these respects it is the opposite of the first limited movement which emerges out of the subconscient; for that is stinted and grey, slow and hampered, easily overcome and broken by the opposition of hostile powers, scanty and bounded in its scope.[3] But this Truth-consciousness manifested in man is capable of being again veiled from him by the insurgence of the powers that deny, the Vritras, Vala. The Rishi therefore prays to Brihaspati to guard it against that obscuration by the fullness of his soul-force.

The Truth-consciousness is the foundation of the superconscient, the nature of which is the Bliss. It is the supreme of the supraconscient, *paramā parāvat*, from which the being has descended, the *parama parārdha* of the Upanishads, the existence of Sachchidananda. It is to that highest existence that those arise out of this physical consciousness, *ataḥ*, who like the ancient Rishis enter into contact with the Truth-consciousness.[4] They make it their seat and home, *kṣaya*, *okas*. For in the hill of the physical being there are dug for the soul those abounding wells of sweetness which draw out of its hard rigidity the concealed Ananda; at the touch of the Truth the rivers of honey, the quick pourings of the wine of Immortality trickle and stream and break out into a flood of abundance over the whole extent of the human consciousness.[5]

Thus Brihaspati, becoming manifest first of the gods out of

[3] *Dhunetayaḥ supraketaṁ madanto, bṛhaspate abhi ye nas tatasre; pṛṣantaṁ sṛpram adabdham ūrvaṁ, bṛhaspate rakṣatād asya yonim.*

[4] *Bṛhaspate yā paramā parāvad, ata ā te ṛtaspṛśo ni ṣeduḥ.*

[5] *Tubhyaṁ khātā avatā adridugdhā, madhvaḥ ścotanti abhito virapśam.*

the vastness of that Light of the Truth-consciousness, in that highest heavenly space of the supreme superconscient, *maho jyotiṣaḥ parame vyoman*, presents himself in the full sevenfold aspect of our conscious being, multiply born in all the forms of the interplay of its seven principles ranging from the material to the purest spiritual, luminous with their sevenfold ray which lights all our surfaces and all our profundities, and with his triumphant cry dispels and scatters all powers of the Night, all encroachments of the Inconscient, all possible darknesses.[6]

It is by the powers of the Word, by the rhythmic army of the soul-forces that Brihaspati brings all into expression and dispelling all the darknesses that encompass us makes an end of the Night. These are the "Brahma"s of the Veda, charged with the word, the *brahman*, the *mantra*; it is they in the sacrifice who raise heavenward the divine Rik, the Stubh or Stoma. *Ṛk*, connected with the word *arka* which means light or illumination, is the Word considered as a power of realisation in the illuminating consciousness; *stubh* is the Word considered as a power which affirms and confirms in the settled rhythm of things. That which has to be expressed is realised in consciousness, affirmed, finally confirmed by the power of the Word. The "Brahma"s or Brahmana forces are the priests of the Word, the creators by the divine rhythm. It is by their cry that Brihaspati breaks Vala into fragments.

As Vritra is the enemy, the Dasyu, who holds back the flow of the sevenfold waters of conscient existence, — Vritra, the personification of the Inconscient, so Vala is the enemy, the Dasyu, who holds back in his hole, his cave, *bilam*, *guhā*, the herds of the Light; he is the personification of the subconscient. Vala is not himself dark or inconscient, but a cause of darkness. Rather his substance is of the light, *valaṁ gomantam*, *valaṁ govapuṣam*, but he holds the light in himself and denies its conscious manifestation. He has to be broken into fragments in order that the hidden lustres may be liberated. Their escape

[6] *Bṛhaspatiḥ prathamaṁ jāyamāno, maho jyotiṣaḥ parame vyoman; saptāsyas tuvijāto raveṇa, vi saptaraśmir adhamat tamāṁsi.*

is expressed by the emergence of the Bright Ones, the herds of the Dawn, from the cavern below in the physical hill and their driving upward by Brihaspati to the heights of our being whither with them and by them we climb. He calls to them with the voice of the superconscient knowledge; they follow him with the response of the conscious intuition. They give in their course the impulsion to the activities which form the material of the sacrifice and constitute the offerings given to the gods and these also are carried upward till they reach the same divine goal.[7]

This self-expressive Soul, Brihaspati, is the Purusha, the Father of all things; it is the universal Divinity; it is the Bull of the herds, the Master and fertilizer of all these luminous energies evolved or involved, active in the day or obscurely working in the night of things, which constitute the becoming or world-existence, *bhuvanam*. To the Purusha under the name of Brihaspati the Rishi would have us dispose in the order of a sacrifice all the materials of our being by sacrificial action in which they are given up to the All-Soul as acceptable oblations offered with adoration and surrender. By the sacrifice we shall become through the grace of this godhead full of heroic energy for the battle of life, rich in the offspring of the soul, masters of the felicities which are attained by divine enlightenment and right action.[8]

For the soul's energy and overcoming force are perfected in the human being who bears in himself and is able to bear firmly this conscious Soul-power brought forward as the leading agency in the nature, who arrives by it at a rapid and joyous movement of the inner activities as did the pristine sages, compasses that harmonious bound and gallop of the steed of Life within and adores always this godhead giving it the first fruits of all results and enjoyments. By that energy he throws himself upon and masters all that comes to him in the births, the worlds, the planes of consciousness that open upon his perception in the

[7] *Sa suṣṭubhā sa ṛkvatā gaṇena, valaṁ ruroja phaligaṁ raveṇa; bṛhaspatir usriyā havyasūdaḥ, kanikradad vāvaśatīr udājat.*
[8] *Evā pitre viśvadevāya vṛṣṇe, yajñair vidhema namasā havirbhiḥ; bṛhaspate suprajā vīravanto, vayaṁ syāma patayo rayīṇām.*

progress of the being. He becomes the king, the *samrāṭ*, ruler of his world-environment.[9]

For such a soul attains to a firmly settled existence in its own proper home, the Truth-consciousness, the infinite totality, and for it at all times Ila, the highest Word, premier energy of the Truth-consciousness, she who is the direct revealing vision in knowledge and becomes in that knowledge the spontaneous self-attainment of the Truth of things in action, result and experience, — Ila grows perpetually in body and richness. To him all creatures of themselves incline, they submit to the Truth in him because it is one with the Truth in themselves. For the conscious Soul-Power that is the universal creator and realiser, leads in all his activities. It gives him the guidance of the Truth in his relations with all creatures and therefore he acts upon them with an entire and spontaneous mastery. This is the ideal state of man that the soul-force should lead him, Brihaspati, Brahma, the spiritual light and counsellor, and he realising himself as Indra, the royal divinity of action, should govern himself and all his environment in the right of their common Truth. *Brahmā rājani pūrva eti.*[10]

For this Brahma, this creative Soul seeks to manifest and increase himself in the royalty of the human nature and he who attains to that royalty of light and power and creates in himself for Brahma that highest human good, finds himself always cherished, fostered, increased by all the divine cosmic powers who work for the supreme consummation. He wins all those possessions of the soul which are necessary for the royalty of the spirit, those that belong to his own plane of consciousness, and those that present themselves to him from other planes of consciousness. Nothing can assail or affect his triumphant progress.[11]

9 *Sa id rājā pratijanyāni viśvā, śuṣmeṇa tasthāv abhi vīryeṇa; bṛhaspatiṁ yaḥ subhṛtaṁ bibharti, valgūyati vandate pūrvabhājam.*

10 *Sa it kṣeti sudhita okasi sve, tasmā iḷā pinvate viśvadānīm; tasmai viśaḥ svayam evā namante, yasmin brahmā rājani pūrva eti.*

11 *Apratīto jayati saṁ dhanāni, pratijanyāni uta yā sajanyā; avasyave yo varivaḥ kṛṇoti, brahmaṇe rājā tam avanti devāḥ.*

Indra and Brihaspati are thus the two divine powers whose fullness in us and conscious possession of the Truth are the conditions of our perfection. Vamadeva calls on them to drink in this great sacrifice the wine of immortal Ananda, rejoicing in the intoxication of its ecstasies, pouring out abundantly the substance and riches of the spirit. Those outpourings of the superconscient beatitude must enter into the soul-force and there take being perfectly. Thus a felicity will be formed, a governed harmony, replete with all the energies and capacities of the perfected nature which is master of itself and its world.[12]

So let Brihaspati and Indra increase in us and that state of right mentality which together they build will be manifested; for that is the first condition. Let them foster the growing thoughts and bring into expression those energies of the mental being which by an enriched and multiple thought become capable of the illumination and rapidity of the Truth-consciousness. The powers that attack the Aryan fighter, would create in him poverties of mind and poverties of the emotive nature, all infelicities. Soul force and mental force increasing together, destroy all such poverty and insufficiency. Together they bring man to his crowning and his perfect kinghood.[13]

[12] *Indraś ca somaṁ pibataṁ bṛhaspate, asmin yajñe mandasānā vṛṣaṇvasū; ā vāṁ viśantu indavaḥ svābhuvo, asme rayiṁ sarvavīraṁ ni yacchatam.*

[13] *Bṛhaspate indra vardhataṃ naḥ, sacā sā vāṁ sumatir bhūtu asme; aviṣṭaṁ dhiyo jigṛtaṁ purandhīr, jajastam aryo vanuṣām arātīḥ.*

X

The Ashwins, Lords of Bliss

Rig Veda IV.45

एष स्य भानुरुदियर्ति युज्यते रथः परिज्मा दिवो अस्य सानवि ।
पृक्षासो अस्मिन्मिथुना अधि त्रयो दृतिस्तुरीयो मधुनो वि रप्शते ॥१॥

1. Lo, that Light is rising up and the all-pervading car is being yoked on the high level of this Heaven; there are placed satisfying delights in their triple pairs and the fourth skin of honey overflows.

उद् वां पृक्षासो मधुमन्त ईरते रथा अश्वास उषसो व्युष्टिषु ।
अपोर्णुवन्तस्तम आ परीवृतं स्वर्ण शुक्रं तन्वन्त आ रजः ॥२॥

2. Full of honey upward rise the delights; upward horses and cars in the wide-shinings of the Dawn and they roll aside the veil of darkness that encompassed on every side and they extend the lower world into a shining form like that of the luminous heaven.

मध्वः पिबतं मधुपेभिरासभिरुत प्रियं मधुने युञ्जाथां रथम् ।
आ वर्तनिं मधुना जिन्वथस्पथो दृतिं वहेथे मधुमन्तमश्विना ॥३॥

3. Drink of the honey with your honey-drinking mouths, for the honey yoke your car beloved. With the honey you gladden the movement and its paths; full of honey, O Ashwins, is the skin that you bear.

हंसासो ये वां मधुमन्तो अस्रिधो हिरण्यपर्णा उहुव उषर्बुधः ।
उदप्रुतो मन्दिनो मन्दिनिस्पृशो मध्वो न मक्षः सवनानि गच्छथः ॥४॥

4. Full of the honey are the swans that bear you, golden-winged, waking with the Dawn, and they come not to hurt; they rain forth the waters, they are full of rapture and touch that which holds the Rapture. Like bees to pourings of honey you come to the Soma-offerings.

स्वध्वरासो मधुमन्तो अग्नय उस्रा जरन्ते प्रति वस्तोरश्विना ।
यन्निक्तहस्तस्तरणिर्विचक्षणः सोमं सुषाव मधुमन्तमद्रिभिः ॥ ५ ॥

5. Full of the honey the fires lead well the sacrifice and they woo your brightness, O Ashwins, day by day, when one with purified hands, with a perfect vision, with power to go through to the goal has pressed out with the pressing-stones the honeyed Soma-wine.

आकेनिपासो अहभिर्दविध्वतः स्वर्ण शुक्रं तन्वन्त आ रजः ।
सूरश्चिदश्वान् युयुजान ईयते विश्वाँ अनु स्वधया चेतथस्पथः ॥ ६ ॥

6. Drinking the wine near them, the fires ride and run and extend the lower world into a shining form like that of the luminous heaven. The Sun too goes yoking his steeds; by force of Nature's self-arranging you move consciously along all paths.[1]

प्र वामवोचमश्विना धियंधा रथः स्वश्वो अजरो यो अस्ति ।
येन सद्यः परि रजांसि याथो हविष्मन्तं तरणिं भोजमच्छ ॥ ७ ॥

7. I have declared, O Ashwins, holding the Thought in me, your car that is undecaying and drawn by perfect steeds, — your car by which you move at once over all the worlds towards the enjoyment rich in offerings that makes through to the goal.

[1] Or, you take knowledge of all the paths in their order.

COMMENTARY

The hymns of the Rig Veda addressed to the two shining Twins, like those addressed to the Ribhus, are full of symbolic expressions and unintelligible without a firm clue to their symbolism. The three leading features of these hymns to the Ashwins are the praise of their chariot, their horses and their rapid all-pervading movement; their seeking of honey and their joy in the honey, *madhu*, and the satisfying delights that they carry in their car; and their close association with the Sun, with Suryā the daughter of the Sun and with the Dawn.

The Ashwins like the other gods descend from the Truth-consciousness, the Ritam; they are born or manifested from Heaven, from Dyaus, the pure Mind; their movement pervades all the worlds, — the effect of their action ranges from the body through the vital being and the thought to the superconscient Truth. It commences indeed from the ocean, from the vague of the being as it emerges out of the subconscient and they conduct the soul over the flood of these waters and prevent its foundering on its voyage. They are therefore *Nāsatyā*, lords of the movement, leaders of the journey or voyage.

They help man with the Truth which comes to them especially by association with the Dawn, with Surya, lord of the Truth, and with Suryā, his daughter, but they help him more characteristically with the delight of being. They are lords of bliss, *śubhaspatī*; their car or movement is loaded with the satisfactions of the delight of being in all its planes; they bear the skin full of the overflowing honey; they seek the honey, the sweetness, and fill all things with it. They are therefore effective powers of the Ananda which proceeds out of the Truth-consciousness and which manifesting itself variously in all the three worlds maintains man in his journey. Hence their action is in all the worlds. They are especially riders or drivers of the Horse, Ashwins, as their name indicates, — they use the vitality of the human being as the motive-force of the journey: but also they work in the thought and lead it to the Truth. They give health, beauty, wholeness to the body; they are the divine physicians. Of all

the gods they are the most ready to come to man and to create for him ease and joy, *āgamiṣṭhā*, *śubhaspatī*. For this is their peculiar and perfect function. They are essentially lords of weal, of bliss, *śubhaspatī*.

This character of the Ashwins is brought out with a continual emphasis by Vamadeva in the present hymn. In almost every verse occurs with a constant iteration the words *madhu*, *madhumān*, honey, honied. It is a hymn to the sweetness of existence; it is a chant of the delight of being.

The great Light of lights, the Sun of Truth, the illumination of the Truth-consciousness is rising up out of the movement of life to create the illumined Mind, Swar, which completes the evolution of the lower triple world. *Eṣa sya bhānur udiyarti*. By this rising of the Sun in man, the full movement of the Ashwins becomes possible; for by the Truth comes the realised Delight, the heavenly beatitude. Therefore, the chariot of the Ashwins is being yoked upon the height of this Dyaus, the high level or plane of the resplendent mind. That chariot is all-pervading; its motion goes everywhere; its speed runs freely on all planes of our consciousness. *Yujyate rathaḥ parijmā divo asya sānavi*.

The full all-pervading movement of the Ashwins brings with it the fullness of all the possible satisfactions of the delight of being. This is expressed symbolically in the language of the Veda by saying that in their car are found the satisfactions, *pṛkṣāsaḥ*, in three pairs, *pṛkṣāsa asmin mithunā adhi trayaḥ*. The word *pṛkṣa* is rendered food in the ritual interpretation like the kindred word *prayas*. The root means pleasure, fullness, satisfaction, and may have the material sense of a "delicacy" or satisfying food and the psychological sense of a delight, pleasure or satisfaction. The satisfactions or delicacies which are carried in the car of the Ashwins are, then, in three pairs; or the phrase may simply mean, they are three but closely associated together. In any case, the reference is to the three kinds of satisfaction or pleasure which correspond to the three movements or worlds of our progressive consciousness, — satisfactions of the body, satisfactions of the vitality, satisfactions of the mind. If they are in three pairs, then we must understand that on each plane there

is a double action of the delight corresponding to the double and united twinhood of the Ashwins. It is difficult in the Veda itself to distinguish between these brilliant and happy Twins or to discover what each severally represents. We have no such indication as is given us in the case of the three Ribhus. But perhaps the Greek names of these two Dioskouroi, *Divo napātā*, sons of Heaven, contain a clue. Kastor, the name of the elder, seems to be Kashtri, the Shining One; Poludeukes[2] may possibly be Purudansas, a name which occurs in the Veda as an epithet of the Ashwins, the Manifold in activity. If so, the twin birth of the Ashwins recalls the constant Vedic dualism of Power and Light, Knowledge and Will, Consciousness and Energy, Go and Ashwa. In all the satisfactions brought to us by the Ashwins these two elements are inseparably united; where the form is that of the Light or Consciousness, there Power and Energy are contained; where the form is that of the Power or Energy, there Light and Consciousness are contained.

But these three forms of satisfaction are not all that their chariot holds for us; there is something else, a fourth, a skin full of honey and out of this skin the honey breaks and overflows on every side. *Dṛtis turīyo madhuno vi rapśate.* Mind, life and body, these are three; *turīya*, the fourth plane of our consciousness, is the superconscient, the Truth-consciousness. The Ashwins bring with them a skin, *dṛti*, literally a thing cut or torn, a partial formation out of the Truth-consciousness to contain the honey of the superconscient Beatitude; but it cannot contain it; that unconquerably abundant and infinite sweetness breaks out and overflows everywhere drenching with delight the whole of our existence.

With that honey the three pairs of satisfactions, mental, vital, bodily are impregnated by this all-pervasive overflowing plenty and they become full of its sweetness, *madhumantaḥ*. And so becoming, at once they begin to move upward. Touched

[2] The *k* of Poludeukes points to an original *ś*; the name would then be *Purudaṁśas*; but such fluctuations between the various sibilants were common enough in the early fluid state of the Aryan tongues.

by the divine delight all our satisfactions in this lower world soar upward irresistibly attracted towards the superconscient, towards the Truth, towards the Beatitude. And with them, — for, secretly or openly, consciously or subconsciously it is the delight of being that is the leader of our activities, — all the chariots and horses of these gods take the same soaring upward movement. All the various movements of our being, all the forms of Force that give them their impulsion, all follow the ascending light of Truth towards its home. *Ud vāṁ pṛkṣāso madhumanta īrate, rathā aśvāsa uṣaso vyuṣṭiṣu.*

"In the wide-shinings of the Dawn" they rise; for Dawn is the illumination of the Truth rising upon the mentality to bring the day of full consciousness into the darkness or half-lit night of our being. She comes as Dakshina, the pure intuitive discernment on which Agni the God-force in us feeds when he aspires towards the Truth or as Sarama, the discovering intuition, who penetrates into the cave of the subconscient where the niggard lords of sense-action have hidden the radiant herds of the Sun and gives information to Indra. Then comes the lord of luminous Mind and breaks open the cave and drives upward the herds, *udājat*, upwards towards the vast Truth-consciousness, the own home of the gods. Our conscious existence is a hill (*adri*) with many successive levels and elevations, *sānūni*; the cave of the subconscient is below; we climb upwards towards the godhead of the Truth and Bliss where are the seats of Immortality, *yatrāmṛtāsa āsate*.[3]

By this upward movement of the chariot of the Ashwins with its burden of uplifted and transformed satisfactions the veil of Night that encompasses the worlds of being in us is rolled away. All these worlds, mind, life, body, are opened to the rays of the Sun of Truth. This lower world in us, *rajas*, is extended and shaped by this ascending movement of all its powers and satisfactions into the very brightness of the luminous intuitive mind, Swar, which receives directly the higher Light. The mind, the act, the vital, emotional, substantial existence, all becomes

[3] R.V. IX.15.2.

full of the glory and the intuition, the power and the light of the divine Sun, — *tat savitur vareṇyaṁ bhargo devasya.*[4] The lower mental existence is transformed into an image and reflection of the higher Divine. *Aporṇuvantas tama ā parīvṛtaṁ, svar ṇa śukraṁ tanvanta ā rajaḥ.*

This verse closes the general description of the perfect and final movement of the Ashwins. In the third the Rishi Vamadeva turns to his own ascension, his own offering of the Soma, his voyage and sacrifice; he claims for it their beatific and glorifying action. The mouths of the Ashwins are made to drink of the sweetness; in his sacrifice, then, let them drink of it. *Madhvaḥ pibataṁ madhupebhir āsabhiḥ.* Let them yoke their chariot for the honey, their chariot beloved of men; *uta priyaṁ madhune yuñjāthāṁ ratham.* For man's movement, his progressive activity, is made by them glad in all its paths with that very honey and sweetness of the Ananda. *Ā vartaniṁ madhunā jinvathas pathaḥ.* For they bear the skin full and overflowing with its honey. *Dṛtiṁ vahethe madhumantam aśvinā.* By the action of the Ashwins man's progress towards the beatitude becomes itself beatific; all his travail and struggle and labour grows full of a divine delight. As it is said in the Veda that by Truth is the progress towards the Truth, that is to say by the growing law of the Truth in the mental and physical consciousness we arrive finally beyond mind and body to the superconscient Truth, so here it is indicated that by Ananda is the progress towards the Ananda, — by a divine delight growing in all our members, in all our activities we arrive at the superconscious beatitude.

In the upward movement the horses that draw the chariot of the Ashwins change into birds, into swans, *haṁsāsaḥ.* The Bird in the Veda is the symbol, very frequently, of the soul liberated and upsoaring, at other times of energies so liberated and upsoaring, winging upwards towards the heights of our being, winging widely with a free flight, no longer involved in the ordinary limited movement or labouring gallop of the Life-energy, the Horse, Ashwa. Such are the energies that draw the

[4] The great phrase of the Gayatri, R.V. III.62.10.

free car of the Lords of Delight, when there dawns on us the Sun of the Truth. These winged movements are full of the honey showered from the overflowing skin, *madhumantaḥ*. They are unassailable, *asridhaḥ*, they come to no hurt in their flight; or, the sense may be, they make no false or hurtful movement. And they are golden-winged, *hiraṇyaparṇāḥ*. Gold is the symbolic colour of the light of Surya. The wings of these energies are the full, satisfied, attaining movement, *parṇa*, of his luminous knowledge. For these are the birds that awake with the Dawn; these are the winged energies that come forth from their nests when the feet of the daughter of Heaven press the levels of our human mentality, *divo asya sānavi*. Such are the swans that bear the swift-riding Twins. *Haṁsāso ye vāṁ madhumanto asridho, hiraṇyaparṇā uhuva uṣarbudhaḥ*.

Full of the honey these winged energies shower on us as they rise the abundance of the waters of heaven, the full outpouring of the high mental consciousness; they are instinct with ecstasy, with rapture, with the intoxication of the immortal wine; and they touch, they come into conscious contact with that superconscient being which is eternally in possession of the ecstasy, rapturous for ever with its divine intoxication. *Udapruto mandino mandinispṛśaḥ*. Drawn by them the Lords of delight come to the Rishi's Soma-offerings like bees to tricklings of honey; *madhvo na makṣaḥ savanāni gacchathaḥ*. Makers themselves of the sweetness, they like the bees seek whatever sweetness can serve them as their material for more delight.

In the sacrifice the same movement of general illumination already described as the result of the ascending flight of the Ashwins is now described as being effected by the aid of the fires of Agni. For the flames of the Will, the divine Force burning up in the soul, are also drenched with the overflowing sweetness and therefore they perform perfectly from day to day their great office of leading the sacrifice[5] progressively to its goal. For that

[5] *Adhvara*, the word for sacrifice, is really an adjective and the full phrase is *adhvara yajña*, sacrificial action travelling on the path, the sacrifice that is of the nature of a progression or journey. Agni, the Will, is the leader of the sacrifice.

progress they woo with their flaming tongues the daily visitation of the brilliant Ashwins who are bright with the light of the intuitive illuminations and uphold them with their thought of flashing energy.[6] *Svadhvarāso madhumanta agnaya usrā jarante prati vastor aśvinā.*

This aspiration of Agni happens when the Sacrificer with pure hands, with a perfectly discerning vision, with power in his soul to travel to the end of its pilgrimage, to the goal of the sacrifice through all obstacles, breaking all opposers, has pressed out the immortalising wine with the pressing-stones and that too becomes full of the honey of the Ashwins. *Yan niktahastas taraṇir vicakṣaṇaḥ, somaṁ suṣāva madhumantam adribhiḥ*. For the individual's delight in things is met by the Ashwins' triple satisfactions and by the fourth, the delight pouring from the Truth. The cleansed hands of the Sacrificer, *niktahastaḥ*, are possibly symbolic[7] of the purified physical being; the power comes from a fulfilled life-energy; the force of clear mental vision, *vicakṣaṇa*, is the sign of the truth-illumined mind. These are the conditions in mind, life and body for the overflowing of the honey over the triple satisfactions of the Ashwins.

When the sacrificer has thus pressed out the honey-filled delight of things in his sacrifice, the flames of the Will are able to drink them from near, they are not compelled to bring them meagrely or with pain from a distant and hardly accessible plane of consciousness. Therefore, drinking immediately and freely, they become full of an exultant force and swiftness and run and race about over the whole field of our being to extend and build up the lower consciousness into the shining image of the world of free and luminous Mind. *Ākenipāso ahabhir davidhvataḥ, svar ṇa śukraṁ tanvanta ā rajaḥ*. The formula used is repeated without variation from the second Rik; but here it is the flames of the Will full of the fourfold satisfaction that do the work. There the free upsoaring of the gods by the mere touch of the

6 *Śavīrayā dhiyā*, R.V. I.3.2.
7 The hand or arm is often, however, otherwise symbolic, especially when it is the two hands or arms of Indra that are in question.

Light and without effort; here the firm labour and aspiration of man in his sacrifice. For then it is by Time, by the days, that the work is perfected, *ahabhiḥ*, by successive dawns of the Truth each with its victory over the night, by the unbroken succession of the sisters of which we have had mention in the hymn to the divine Dawn. Man cannot seize or hold at once all that the illumination brings to him; it has to be repeated constantly so that he may grow in the light.

But not only the fires of the Will are at work to transform the lower consciousness. The Sun of Truth yokes also his lustrous coursers and is in movement; *sūraś cid aśvān yuyujāna īyate*. The Ashwins too take knowledge for the human consciousness of all the paths of its progress so that it may effect a complete, harmonious and many-sided movement. This movement advancing in many paths is combined in the light of the divine knowledge by the spontaneous self-arranging action of Nature which she assumes when the will and the knowledge are wedded in the perfect harmony of a fully self-conscious, intuitively guided action. *Viśvān anu svadhayā cetathas pathaḥ.*

Vamadeva closes his hymn. He has been able to hold firmly the shining Thought with its high illumination and has expressed in himself by the shaping and fixing power of the Word the chariot, that is to say, the immortal movement of the delight of the Ashwins; the movement of a bliss that does not fade or grow old or exhaust itself, — it is ageless and undecaying, *ajaraḥ*, — because it is drawn by perfect and liberated energies and not by the limited and soon exhausted, soon recalcitrant horses of the human vitality. *Pra vām avocam aśvinā dhiyaṁdhā, rathaḥ svaśvo ajaro yo asti.* In this movement they traverse in a moment all the worlds of the lower consciousness, covering it with their speeding delights, and so arrive to that universal enjoyment in man full of his offering of the Soma-wine by which they can lead him, puissantly entering into it, through all opposers and to the great goal. *Yena sadyaḥ pari rajāṁsi yātho, haviṣmantaṁ taraṇiṁ bhojam accha.*

XI

The Ribhus, Artisans of Immortality

Rig Veda I.20

अयं देवाय जन्मने स्तोमो विप्रेभिरासया ।
अकारि रत्नधातमः ॥ १॥

1. Lo, the affirmation made for the divine Birth with the breath of the mouth by illumined minds, that gives perfectly the bliss;

य इन्द्राय वचोयुजा ततक्षुर्मनसा हरी ।
शमीभिर्यज्ञमाशत ॥ २॥

2. Even they who fashioned by the mind for Indra his two bright steeds that are yoked by Speech, and they enjoy the sacrifice by their accomplishings of the work.

तक्षन्नासत्याभ्यां परिज्मानं सुखं रथम् ।
तक्षन्धेनुं सबर्दुघाम् ॥ ३॥

3. They fashioned for the twin lords of the voyage their happy car of the all-pervading movement, they fashioned the fostering cow that yields the sweet milk.

युवाना पितरा पुनः सत्यमन्त्रा ऋजूयवः ।
ऋभवो विष्ट्यक्रत ॥ ४॥

4. O Ribhus, in your pervasion you made young again the Parents, you who seek the straight path and have the Truth in your mentalisings.

सं वो मदासो अग्मतेन्द्रेण च मरुत्वता ।
आदित्येभिश्च राजभिः ॥ ५ ॥

5. The raptures of the wine come to you entirely, to you with Indra companioned by the Maruts and with the Kings, the sons of Aditi.

उत त्यं चमसं नवं त्वष्टुर्देवस्य निष्कृतम् ।
अकर्त चतुरः पुनः ॥ ६ ॥

6. And this bowl of Twashtri new and perfected you made again into four.

ते नो रत्नानि धत्तन त्रिरा साप्तानि सुन्वते ।
एकमेकं सुशस्तिभिः ॥ ७ ॥

7. So establish for us the thrice seven ecstasies, each separately by perfect expressings of them.

अधारयन्त वह्नयोऽभजन्त सुकृत्यया ।
भागं देवेषु यज्ञियम् ॥ ८ ॥

8. They sustained and held in them, they divided by perfection in their works the sacrificial share of the enjoyment among the Gods.

COMMENTARY

The Ribhus, it has been suggested, are rays of the Sun. And it is true that like Varuna, Mitra, Bhaga and Aryaman they are powers of the solar Light, the Truth. But their special character in the Veda is that they are artisans of Immortality. They are represented as human beings who have attained to the condition of godhead by power of knowledge and perfection in their works. Their function is to aid Indra in raising man towards the same state of divine light and bliss which they themselves have earned

as their own divine privilege. The hymns addressed to them in the Veda are few and to the first glance exceedingly enigmatical; for they are full of certain figures and symbols always repeated. But once the principal clues of the Veda are known, they become on the contrary exceedingly clear and simple and present a coherent and interesting idea which sheds a clear light on the Vedic gospel of immortality.

The Ribhus are powers of the Light who have descended into Matter and are there born as human faculties aspiring to become divine and immortal. In this character they are called children of Sudhanwan,[1] a patronymic which is merely a parable of their birth from the full capacities of Matter touched by the luminous energy. But in their real nature they are descended from this luminous Energy and are sometimes so addressed, "Offspring of Indra, grandsons of luminous Force." For Indra, the divine mind in man, is born out of luminous Force as is Agni out of pure Force, and from Indra the divine Mind spring the human aspirations after Immortality.

The names of the three Ribhus are, in the order of their birth, Ribhu or Ribhukshan, the skilful Knower or the Shaper in knowledge, Vibhwa or Vibhu, the Pervading, the self-diffusing, and Vaja, the Plenitude. Their names indicate their special nature and function, but they are really a trinity, and therefore, although usually termed the Ribhus, they are also called the Vibhus and the Vajas. Ribhu, the eldest is the first in man who begins to shape by his thoughts and works the forms of immortality; Vibhwa gives pervasiveness to this working; Vaja, the youngest, supplies the plenitude of the divine light and substance by which the complete work can be done. These works and formations of immortality they effect, it is continually repeated, by the force of Thought, with the mind for field and material; they are done with power; they are attended by a perfection in the creative and effective act, *svapasyayā sukṛtyayā*, which is the condition of the working out of Immortality. These formations of the artisans of

[1] "Dhanwan" in this name does not mean "bow" but the solid or desert field of Matter otherwise typified as the hill or rock out of which the waters and the rays are delivered.

Immortality are, as they are briefly summarised in the hymn before us, the horses of Indra, the car of the Ashwins, the Cow that gives the sweet milk, the youth of the universal Parents, the multiplication into four of the one drinking-bowl of the gods originally fashioned by Twashtri, the Framer of things.

The hymn opens with an indication of its objective. It is an affirmation of the power of the Ribhus made for the divine Birth, made by men whose minds have attained to illumination and possess that energy of the Light from which the Ribhus were born. It is made by the breath of the mouth, the life-power in the world. Its object is to confirm in the human soul the entire delight of the Beatitude, the thrice seven ecstasies of the divine Life.[2]

This divine Birth is represented by the Ribhus who, once human, have become immortal. By their accomplishings of the work, — the great work of upward human evolution which is the summit of the world-sacrifice, — they have gained in that sacrifice their divine share and privilege along with the divine powers. They are the sublimated human energies of formation and upward progress who assist the gods in the divinising of man. And of all their accomplishings that which is central is the formation of the two brilliant horses of Indra, the horses yoked by speech to their movements, yoked by the Word and fashioned by the mind. For the free movement of the luminous mind, the divine mind in man, is the condition of all other immortalising works.[3]

The second work of the Ribhus is to fashion the chariot of the Ashwins, lords of the human journey, — the happy movement of the Ananda in man which pervades with its action all his worlds or planes of being, bringing health, youth, strength, wholeness to the physical man, capacity of enjoyment and action to the vital, glad energy of the light to the mental being, — in a word, the force of the pure delight of being in all his members.[4]

[2] *Ayaṁ devāya janmane, stomo viprebhir āsayā; akāri ratnadhātamaḥ.*
[3] *Ya indrāya vacoyujā, tatakṣur manasā harī; śamībhir yajñam āśata.*
[4] *Takṣan nāsatyābhyāṁ, parijmānaṁ sukhaṁ ratham.*

The third work of the Ribhus is to fashion the cow who gives the sweet milk. It is said elsewhere that this cow has been delivered out of its covering skin, — the veil of Nature's outward movement and action, — by the Ribhus. The fostering cow herself is she of the universal forms and universal impetus of movement, *viśvajuvaṁ viśvarūpām*, in other words she is the first Radiance, Aditi, the infinite Consciousness of the infinite conscious Being which is the mother of the worlds. That consciousness is brought out by the Ribhus from the veiling movement of Nature and a figure of her is fashioned here in us by them. She is, by the action of the powers of the duality, separated from her offspring, the soul in the lower world; the Ribhus restore it to constant companionship with its infinite mother.[5]

Another great work of the Ribhus is in the strength of their previous deeds, of the light of Indra, the movement of the Ashwins, the full yield of the fostering Cow to restore youth to the aged Parents of the world, Heaven and Earth. Heaven is the mental consciousness, Earth the physical. These in their union are represented as lying long old and prostrate like fallen sacrificial posts, worn-out and suffering. The Ribhus, it is said, ascend to the house of the Sun where he lives in the unconcealed splendour of his Truth and there slumbering for twelve days afterwards traverse the heaven and the earth, filling them with abundant rain of the streams of Truth, nourishing them, restoring them to youth and vigour.[6] They pervade heaven with their workings, they bring divine increase to the mentality;[7] they give to it and the physical being a fresh and young and immortal movement.[8] For from the home of the Truth they bring with them the perfection of that which is the condition of their work, the movement in the straight path of the Truth and the Truth itself with its absolute effectivity in all the thoughts and words of the mentality. Carrying this power with them in

[5] *Takṣan dhenuṁ sabardughām*. For the other details see R.V. IV.33.4 and 8, 36.4 etc.
[6] R.V. IV.33.2, 3, 7; 36.1, 3; I.161.7.
[7] R.V. IV.33.1, 2.
[8] R.V. V.36.3.

their pervading entry into the lower world, they pour into it the immortal essence.[9]

It is the wine of that immortal essence with its ecstasies which they win by their works and bring with them to man in his sacrifice. And with them come and sit Indra and the Maruts, the divine Mind and its Thought-forces, and the four great Kings, sons of Aditi, children of the Infinite, Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman, Bhaga, the purity and vastness of the Truth-consciousness, its law of love and light and harmony, its power and aspiration, its pure and happy enjoyment of things.[10]

And there at the sacrifice the gods drink in the fourfold bowl, *camasaṁ caturvayam*, the pourings of the nectar. For Twashtri, the Framer of things, has given man originally only a single bowl, the physical consciousness, the physical body in which to offer the delight of existence to the gods. The Ribhus, powers of luminous knowledge, take it as renewed and perfected by Twashtri's later workings and build up in him from the material of the four planes three other bodies, vital, mental and the causal or ideal body.[11]

Because they have made this fourfold cup of bliss and enabled him thereby to live on the plane of the Truth-consciousness they are able to establish in the perfected human being the thrice seven ecstasies of the supreme existence poured into the mind, vitality and body. Each of these they can give perfectly by the full expression of its separate absolute ecstasy even in the combination of the whole.[12]

The Ribhus have power to support and contain all these floods of the delight of being in the human consciousness; and they are able to divide it in the perfection of their works among the manifested gods, to each god his sacrificial share. For such perfect division is the whole condition of the effective sacrifice, the perfect work.[13]

9 *Yuvānā pitarā punaḥ, satyamantrā ṛjūyavaḥ; ṛbhavo viṣṭyakrata.*
10 *Saṁ vo madāsa agmata, indreṇa ca marutvatā; ādityebhiś ca rājabhiḥ.*
11 *Uta tyaṁ camasaṁ navaṁ, tvaṣṭur devasya niṣkṛtam; akarta caturaḥ punaḥ.*
12 *Te no ratnāni dhattana, trir ā sāptāni sunvate; ekam ekaṁ suśastibhiḥ.*
13 *Adhārayanta vahnayo, abhajanta sukṛtyayā; bhāgaṁ deveṣu yajñiyam.*

Such are the Ribhus and they are called to the human sacrifice to fashion for man the things of immortality even as they fashioned them for themselves. "He becomes full of plenitude and strength for the labour, he becomes a Rishi by power of self-expression, he becomes a hero and a smiter hard to pierce in the battles, he holds in himself increase of bliss and entire energy whom Vaja and Vibhwa, the Ribhus foster. . . . For you are seers and thinkers clear-discerning; as such with this thought of our soul we declare to you our knowledge. Do you in your knowledge moving about our thoughts fashion for us all human enjoyings, — luminous plenitude and fertilising force and supreme felicity. Here issue, here felicity, here a great energy of inspiration fashion for us in your delight. Give to us, O Ribhus, that richly-varied plenitude by which we shall awaken in our consciousness to things beyond ordinary men."[14]

[14] R.V. IV.36.6-9.

XII

Vishnu, the All-Pervading Godhead

Rig Veda I.154

विष्णोर्नु कं वीर्याणि प्र वोचं यः पार्थिवानि विममे रजांसि ।
यो अस्कभायदुत्तरं सधस्थं विचक्रमाणस्त्रेधोरुगायः ॥ १॥

1. Of Vishnu now I declare the mighty works, who has measured out the earthly worlds and that higher seat of our self-accomplishing he supports, he the wide-moving, in the threefold steps of his universal movement.

प्र तद्विष्णुः स्तवते वीर्येण मृगो न भीमः कुचरो गिरिष्ठाः ।
यस्योरुषु त्रिषु विक्रमणेष्वधिक्षियन्ति भुवनानि विश्वा ॥ २॥

2. That Vishnu affirms on high by his mightiness and he is like a terrible lion that ranges in the difficult places, yea, his lair is on the mountain-tops, he in whose three wide movements all the worlds find their dwelling-place.

प्र विष्णवे शूषमेतु मन्म गिरिक्षित उरुगायाय वृष्णे ।
य इदं दीर्घं प्रयतं सधस्थमेको विममे त्रिभिरित्पदेभिः ॥ ३॥

3. Let our strength and our thought go forward to Vishnu the all-pervading, the wide-moving Bull whose dwelling-place is on the mountain, he who being One has measured all this long and far-extending seat of our self-accomplishing by only three of his strides.

यस्य त्री पूर्णा मधुना पदान्यक्षीयमाणा स्वधया मदन्ति ।
य उ त्रिधातु पृथिवीमुत द्यामेको दाधार भुवनानि विश्वा ॥ ४॥

4. He whose three steps are full of the honey-wine and they perish not but have ecstasy by the self-harmony of their nature; yea, he being One holds the triple principle and earth and heaven also, even all the worlds.

तदस्य प्रियमभि पाथो अश्यां नरो यत्र देवयवो मदन्ति ।
उरुक्रमस्य स हि बन्धुरित्था विष्णोः पदे परमे मध्व उत्सः ॥ ५ ॥

5. May I attain to and enjoy that goal of his movement, the Delight, where souls that seek the godhead have the rapture; for there in that highest step of the wide-moving Vishnu is that Friend of men who is the fount of the sweetness.

ता वां वास्तून्युश्मसि गमध्यै यत्र गावो भूरिशृङ्गा अयासः ।
अत्राह तदुरुगायस्य वृष्णः परमं पदमव भाति भूरि ॥ ६ ॥

6. Those are the dwelling-places of ye twain which we desire as the goal of our journey where the many-horned herds of Light go travelling; the highest step of wide-moving Vishnu shines down on us here in its manifold vastness.

COMMENTARY

The deity of this hymn is Vishnu the all-pervading, who in the Rig Veda has a close but covert connection and almost an identity with the other deity exalted in the later religion, Rudra. Rudra is a fierce and violent godhead with a beneficent aspect which approaches the supreme blissful reality of Vishnu; Vishnu's constant friendliness to man and his helping gods is shadowed by an aspect of formidable violence, — "like a terrible lion ranging in evil and difficult places", — which is spoken of in terms more ordinarily appropriate to Rudra. Rudra is the father of the vehemently-battling Maruts; Vishnu is hymned in the last Sukta of the fifth Mandala under the name of Evaya Marut as the source from which they sprang, that which they become and himself identical with the unity and totality of their embattled forces. Rudra is the Deva or Deity ascending in the

cosmos, Vishnu the same Deva or Deity helping and evoking the powers of the ascent.

It was a view long popularised by European scholars that the greatness of Vishnu and Shiva in the Puranic theogonies was a later development and that in the Veda these gods have a quite minor position and are inferior to Indra and Agni. It has even become a current opinion among many scholars that Shiva was a later conception borrowed from the Dravidians and represents a partial conquest of the Vedic religion by the indigenous culture it had invaded. These errors arise inevitably as part of the total misunderstanding of Vedic thought for which the old Brahmanic ritualism is responsible and to which European scholarship by the exaggeration of a minor and external element in the Vedic mythology has only given a new and yet more misleading form.

The importance of the Vedic gods has not to be measured by the number of hymns devoted to them or by the extent to which they are invoked in the thoughts of the Rishis, but by the functions which they perform. Agni and Indra to whom the majority of the Vedic hymns are addressed, are not greater than Vishnu and Rudra, but the functions which they fulfil in the internal and external world were the most active, dominant and directly effective for the psychological discipline of the ancient Mystics; this alone is the reason of their predominance. The Maruts, children of Rudra, are not divinities superior to their fierce and mighty Father; but they have many hymns addressed to them and are far more constantly mentioned in connection with other gods, because the function they fulfilled was of a constant and immediate importance in the Vedic discipline. On the other hand, Vishnu, Rudra, Brahmanaspati, the Vedic originals of the later Puranic Triad, Vishnu-Shiva-Brahma, provide the conditions of the Vedic work and assist it from behind the more present and active gods, but are less close to it and in appearance less continually concerned in its daily movements.

Brahmanaspati is the creator by the Word; he calls light and visible cosmos out of the darkness of the inconscient ocean and speeds the formations of conscious being upward to their supreme goal. It is from this creative aspect of Brahmanaspati

that the later conception of Brahma the Creator arose.

For the upward movement of Brahmanaspati's formations Rudra supplies the force. He is named in the Veda the Mighty One of Heaven, but he begins his work upon the earth and gives effect to the sacrifice on the five planes of our ascent. He is the Violent One who leads the upward evolution of the conscious being; his force battles against all evil, smites the sinner and the enemy; intolerant of defect and stumbling he is the most terrible of the gods, the one of whom alone the Vedic Rishis have any real fear. Agni, the Kumara, prototype of the Puranic Skanda, is on earth the child of this force of Rudra. The Maruts, vital powers which make light for themselves by violence, are Rudra's children. Agni and the Maruts are the leaders of the fierce struggle upward from Rudra's first earthly, obscure creation to the heavens of thought, the luminous worlds. But this violent and mighty Rudra who breaks down all defective formations and groupings of outward and inward life, has also a benigner aspect. He is the supreme healer. Opposed, he destroys; called on for aid and propitiated he heals all wounds and all evil and all sufferings. The force that battles is his gift, but also the final peace and joy. In these aspects of the Vedic god are all the primitive materials necessary for the evolution of the Puranic Shiva-Rudra, the destroyer and healer, the auspicious and terrible, the Master of the force that acts in the worlds and the Yogin who enjoys the supreme liberty and peace.

For the formations of Brahmanaspati's word, for the actions of Rudra's force Vishnu supplies the necessary static elements, — Space, the ordered movements of the worlds, the ascending levels, the highest goal. He has taken three strides and in the space created by the three strides has established all the worlds. In these worlds he the all-pervading dwells and gives less or greater room to the action and movements of the gods. When Indra would slay Vritra, he first prays to Vishnu, his friend and comrade in the great struggle, "O Vishnu, pace out in thy movement with an utter wideness," and in that wideness he destroys Vritra who limits, Vritra who covers. The supreme step of Vishnu, his highest seat, is the triple world of bliss and light,

priyaṁ padam, which the wise ones see extended in heaven like a shining eye of vision; it is this highest seat of Vishnu that is the goal of the Vedic journey. Here again the Vedic Vishnu is the natural precursor and sufficient origin of the Puranic Narayana, Preserver and Lord of Love.

In the Veda indeed its fundamental conception forbids the Puranic arrangement of the supreme Trinity and the lesser gods. To the Vedic Rishis there was only one universal Deva of whom Vishnu, Rudra, Brahmanaspati, Agni, Indra, Vayu, Mitra, Varuna are all alike forms and cosmic aspects. Each of them is in himself the whole Deva and contains all the other gods. It was the full emergence in the Upanishads of the idea of this supreme and only Deva, left in the Riks vague and undefined and sometimes even spoken of in the neuter as That or the one sole existence, the ritualistic limitation of the other gods and the progressive precision of their human or personal aspects under the stress of a growing mythology that led to their degradation and the enthronement of the less used and more general names and forms, Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra, in the final Puranic formulation of the Hindu theogony.

In this hymn of Dirghatamas Auchathya to the all-pervading Vishnu it is his significant activity, it is the greatness of Vishnu's three strides that is celebrated. We must dismiss from our minds the ideas proper to the later mythology. We have nothing to do here with the dwarf Vishnu, the Titan Bali and the three divine strides which took possession of Earth, Heaven and the sunless subterrestrial worlds of Patala. The three strides of Vishnu in the Veda are clearly defined by Dirghatamas as earth, heaven and the triple principle, *tridhātu*. It is this triple principle beyond Heaven or superimposed upon it as its highest level, *nākasya pṛṣṭhe*, which is the supreme stride or supreme seat of the all-pervading deity.

Vishnu is the wide-moving one. He is that which has gone abroad — as it is put in the language of the Isha Upanishad, *sa paryagāt*, — triply extending himself as Seer, Thinker and Former, in the superconscient Bliss, in the heaven of mind, in the earth of the physical consciousness, *tredhā vicakramāṇaḥ*.

In those three strides he has measured out, he has formed in all their extension the earthly worlds; for in the Vedic idea the material world which we inhabit is only one of several steps leading to and supporting the vital and mental worlds beyond. In those strides he supports upon the earth and mid-world, — the earth the material, the mid-world the vital realms of Vayu, Lord of the dynamic Life-principle, — the triple heaven and its three luminous summits, *trīṇi rocanā*. These heavens the Rishi describes as the higher seat of the fulfilling. Earth, the mid-world and heaven are the triple place of the conscious being's progressive self-fulfilling, *triṣadhastha*, earth the lower seat, the vital world the middle, heaven the higher. All these are contained in the threefold movement of Vishnu.[1]

But there is more; there is also the world where the self-fulfilment is accomplished, Vishnu's highest stride. In the second verse the seer speaks of it simply as "that"; "that" Vishnu, moving yet forward in his third pace affirms or firmly establishes, *pra stavate*, by his divine might. Vishnu is then described in language which hints at his essential identity with the terrible Rudra, the fierce and dangerous Lion of the worlds who begins in the evolution as the Master of the animal, Pashupati, and moves upward on the mountain of being on which he dwells, ranging through more and more difficult and inaccessible places, till he stands upon the summits. Thus in these three wide movements of Vishnu all the five worlds and their creatures have their habitation. Earth, heaven and "that" world of bliss are the three strides. Between earth and heaven is the Antariksha, the vital worlds, literally "the intervening habitation". Between heaven and the world of bliss is another vast Antariksha or intervening habitation, Maharloka, the world of the superconscient Truth of things.[2]

The force and the thought of man, the force that proceeds from Rudra the Mighty and the thought that proceeds from

[1] *Viṣṇor nu kaṁ vīryāṇi pra vocaṁ, yaḥ pārthivāni vimame rajāṁsi; yo askabhāyad uttaraṁ sadhasthaṁ, vicakramāṇas tredhorugāyaḥ.*

[2] *Pra tad viṣṇuḥ stavate vīryeṇa, mṛgo na bhīmaḥ kucaro giriṣṭhāḥ; yasyoruṣu triṣu vikramaṇeṣu, adhikṣiyanti bhuvanāni viśvā.*

Brahmanaspati, the creative Master of the Word, have to go forward in the great journey for or towards this Vishnu who stands at the goal, on the summit, on the peak of the mountain. His is this wide universal movement; he is the Bull of the world who enjoys and fertilises all the energies of force and all the trooping herds of the thought. This far-flung extended space which appears to us as the world of our self-fulfilment, as the triple altar of the great sacrifice has been so measured out, so formed by only three strides of that almighty Infinite.[3]

All the three are full of the honey-wine of the delight of existence. All of them this Vishnu fills with his divine joy of being. By that they are eternally maintained and they do not waste or perish, but in the self-harmony of their natural movement have always the unfailing ecstasy, the imperishable intoxication of their wide and limitless existence. Vishnu maintains them unfailingly, preserves them imperishably. He is the One, he alone is, the sole-existing Godhead, and he holds in his being the triple divine principle to which we attain in the world of bliss, earth where we have our foundation and heaven also which we touch by the mental person within us. All the five worlds he upholds.[4] The *tridhātu*, the triple principle or triple material of existence, is the Sachchidananda of the Vedanta; in the ordinary language of the Veda it is *vasu*, substance, *ūrj*, abounding force of our being, *priyam* or *mayas*, delight and love in the very essence of our existence. Of these three things all that exists is constituted and we attain to their fullness when we arrive at the goal of our journey.

That goal is Delight, the last of Vishnu's three strides. The Rishi takes up the indefinite word "*tat*" by which he first vaguely indicated it; it signified the delight that is the goal of Vishnu's movement. It is the Ananda which for man in his ascent is a world in which he tastes divine delight, possesses the full energy of infinite consciousness, realises his infinite existence. There is

[3] *Pra viṣṇave śūṣam etu manma, girikṣita urugāyāya vṛṣṇe; ya idaṁ dīrghaṁ prayataṁ sadhastham, eko vimame tribhir it padebhiḥ.*

[4] *Yasya trī pūrṇā madhunā padāni, akṣīyamāṇā svadhayā madanti; ya u tridhātu pṛthivīm uta dyām, eko dādhāra bhuvanāni viśvā.*

that high-placed source of the honey-wine of existence of which the three strides of Vishnu are full. There the souls that seek the godhead live in the utter ecstasy of that wine of sweetness. There in the supreme stride, in the highest seat of wide-moving Vishnu is the fountain of the honey-wine, the source of the divine sweetness, — for that which dwells there is the Godhead, the Deva, the perfect Friend and Lover of the souls that aspire to him, the unmoving and utter reality of Vishnu to which the wide-moving God in the cosmos ascends.[5]

These are the two, Vishnu of the movement here, the eternally stable, bliss-enjoying Deva there, and it is those supreme dwelling-places of the Twain, it is the triple world of Sachchidananda which we desire as the goal of this long journey, this great upward movement. It is thither that the many-horned herds of the conscious Thought, the conscious Force are moving — that is the goal, that is their resting-place. There in those worlds, gleaming down on us here, is the vast, full, illimitable shining of the supreme stride, the highest seat of the wide-moving Bull, master and leader of all those many-horned herds, — Vishnu the all-pervading, the cosmic Deity, the Lover and Friend of our souls, the Lord of the transcendent existence and the transcendent delight.[6]

[5] *Tad asya priyam abhi pātho aśyāṁ, naro yatra devayavo madanti; urukramasya sa hi bandhur itthā, viṣṇoḥ pade parame madhva utsaḥ.*

[6] *Tā vāṁ vāstūni uśmasi gamadhyai, yatra gāvo bhūriśṛṅgā ayāsaḥ; atrāha tad urugāyasya vṛṣṇaḥ, paramaṁ padam ava bhāti bhūri.*

XIII

Soma, Lord of Delight and Immortality

Rig Veda IX.83

पवित्रं ते विततं ब्रह्मणस्पते प्रभुर्गात्राणि पर्येषि विश्वतः ।
अतप्ततनूर्न तदामो अश्नुते शृतास इद्वहन्तस्तत्समाशत ॥ १॥

1. Wide spread out for thee is the sieve of thy purifying, O Master of the soul; becoming in the creature thou pervadest his members all through. He tastes not that delight who is unripe and whose body has not suffered in the heat of the fire; they alone are able to bear that and enjoy it who have been prepared by the flame.

तपोष्पवित्रं विततं दिवस्पदे शोचन्तो अस्य तन्तवो व्यस्थिरन् ।
अवन्त्यस्य पवीतारमाशवो दिवस्पृष्ठमधि तिष्ठन्ति चेतसा ॥ २॥

2. The strainer through which the heat of him is purified is spread out in the seat of Heaven; its threads shine out and stand extended. His swift ecstasies foster the soul that purifies him; he ascends to the high level of Heaven by the conscious heart.

अरूरुचदुषसः पृश्निरग्रिय उक्षा बिभर्ति भुवनानि वाजयुः ।
मायाविनो ममिरे अस्य मायया नृचक्षसः पितरो गर्भमा दधुः ॥ ३॥

3. This is the supreme dappled Bull that makes the Dawns to shine out, the Male that bears the worlds of the becoming and seeks the plenitude; the Fathers who had the forming knowledge made a form of him by that power of knowledge

which is his; strong in vision they set him within as a child to be born.

गन्धर्व इत्था पदमस्य रक्षति पाति देवानां जनिमान्यद्भुतः ।
गृभ्णाति रिपुं निधया निधापतिः सुकृत्तमा मधुनो भक्षमाशत ॥ ४ ॥

4. As the Gandharva he guards his true seat; as the supreme and wonderful One he keeps the births of the gods; Lord of the inner setting, by the inner setting he seizes the enemy. Those who are utterly perfected in works taste the enjoyment of his honey-sweetness.

हविर्हविष्मो महि सद्म दैव्यं नभो वसानः परि यास्यध्वरम् ।
राजा पवित्ररथो वाजमारुहः सहस्रभृष्टिर्जयसि श्रवो बृहत् ॥ ५ ॥

5. O Thou in whom is the food, thou art that divine food, thou art the vast, the divine home; wearing heaven as a robe thou encompassest the march of the sacrifice. King with the sieve of thy purifying for thy chariot thou ascendest to the plenitude; with thy thousand burning brilliances thou conquerest the vast knowledge.

COMMENTARY

It is a marked, an essential feature of the Vedic hymns that, although the Vedic cult was not monotheistic in the modern sense of the word, yet they continually recognise, sometimes quite openly and simply, sometimes in a complex and difficult fashion, always as an underlying thought, that the many godheads whom they invoke are really one Godhead, — One with many names, revealed in many aspects, approaching man in the mask of many divine personalities. Western scholars, puzzled by this religious attitude which presents no difficulty whatever to the Indian mind, have invented, in order to explain it, a theory of Vedic henotheism. The Rishis, they thought, were polytheists, but to each God at the time of worshipping him they gave preeminence and even regarded him as in a way the

sole deity. This invention of henotheism is the attempt of an alien mentality to understand and account for the Indian idea of one Divine Existence who manifests Himself in many names and forms, each of which is for the worshipper of that name and form the one and supreme Deity. That idea of the Divine, fundamental to the Puranic religions, was already possessed by our Vedic forefathers.

The Veda already contains in the seed the Vedantic conception of the Brahman. It recognises an Unknowable, a timeless Existence, the Supreme which is neither today nor tomorrow, moving in the movement of the Gods, but itself vanishing from the attempt of the mind to seize it (R.V. I.170.1). It is spoken of in the neuter as That and often identified with the Immortality, the supreme triple Principle, the vast Bliss to which the human being aspires. The Brahman is the Unmoving, the Oneness of the Gods. "The Unmoving is born as the Vast in the seat of the Cow (Aditi), . . . the vast, the mightiness of the Gods, the One" (III.55.1). It is the one Existent to whom the seers give different names, Indra, Matarishwan, Agni, (I.164.46).

This Brahman, the one Existence, thus spoken of impersonally in the neuter, is also conceived as the Deva, the supreme Godhead, the Father of things who appears here as the Son in the human soul. He is the Blissful One to whom the movement of the Gods ascends, manifest as at once the Male and the Female, *vṛṣan*, *dhenu*. Each of the Gods is a manifestation, an aspect, a personality of the one Deva. He can be realised through any of his names and aspects, through Indra, through Agni, through Soma; for each of them being in himself all the Deva and only in his front or aspect to us different from the others contains all the gods in himself.

Thus Agni is hymned as the supreme and universal Deva. "Thou O Agni, art Varuna when thou art born, thou becomest Mitra when thou art perfectly kindled, in thee are all the Gods, O Son of Force, thou art Indra to the mortal who gives the sacrifice. Thou becomest Aryaman when thou bearest the secret name of the Virgins. They make thee to shine with the radiances (the cows, *gobhiḥ*) as Mitra well-established when

thou makest of one mind the Lord of the house and his consort. For the glory of thee, O Rudra, the Maruts brighten by their pressure that which is the brilliant and varied birth of thee. That which is the highest seat of Vishnu, by that thou protectest the secret Name of the radiances (the cows, *gonām*). By thy glory, O Deva, the gods attain to right vision and holding in themselves all the multiplicity (of the vast manifestation) taste Immortality. Men set Agni in them as the priest of the sacrifice when desiring (the Immortality) they distribute (to the Gods) the self-expression of the being. . . . Do thou in thy knowledge extricate the Father and drive away (sin and darkness), he who is borne in us as thy Son, O Child of Force" (V.3). Indra is similarly hymned by Vamadeva and in this eighty-third Sukta of the ninth Mandala, as in several others, Soma too emerges from his special functions as the supreme Deity.

Soma is the Lord of the wine of delight, the wine of immortality. Like Agni he is found in the plants, the growths of earth, and in the waters. The Soma-wine used in the external sacrifice is the symbol of this wine of delight. It is pressed out by the pressing-stone (*adri*, *grāvan*) which has a close symbolic connection with the thunderbolt, the formed electric force of Indra also called *adri*. The Vedic hymns speak of the luminous thunders of this stone as they speak of the light and sound of Indra's weapon. Once pressed out as the delight of existence Soma has to be purified through a strainer (*pavitra*) and through the strainer he streams in his purity into the wine bowl (*camū*) in which he is brought to the sacrifice, or he is kept in jars (*kalaśa*) for Indra's drinking. Or, sometimes, the symbol of the bowl or the jar is neglected and Soma is simply described as flowing in a river of delight to the seat of the Gods, to the home of Immortality. That these things are symbols is very clear in most of the hymns of the ninth Mandala which are all devoted to the God Soma. Here, for instance, the physical system of the human being is imaged as the jar of the Soma-wine and the strainer through which it is purified is said to be spread out in the seat of Heaven, *divas pade*.

The hymn begins with an imagery which closely follows the physical facts of the purifying of the wine and its pouring into the jar. The strainer or purifying instrument spread out in the seat of Heaven seems to be the mind enlightened by knowledge (*cetas*); the human system is the jar. *Pavitraṁ te vitataṁ brahmaṇaspate*, the strainer is spread wide for thee, O Master of the soul; *prabhur gātrāṇi paryeṣi viśvataḥ*, becoming manifest thou pervadest or goest about the limbs everywhere. Soma is addressed here as Brahmanaspati, a word sometimes applied to other gods, but usually reserved for Brihaspati, Master of the creative Word. *Brahman* in the Veda is the soul or soul-consciousness emerging from the secret heart of things, but more often the thought, inspired, creative, full of the secret truth, which emerges from that consciousness and becomes thought of the mind, *manma*. Here, however, it seems to mean the soul itself. Soma, Lord of the Ananda, is the true creator who possesses the soul and brings out of it a divine creation. For him the mind and heart, enlightened, have been formed into a purifying instrument; freed from all narrowness and duality the consciousness in it has been extended widely to receive the full flow of the sense-life and mind-life and turn it into pure delight of the true existence, the divine, the immortal Ananda.

So received, sifted, strained, the Soma-wine of life turned into Ananda comes pouring into all the members of the human system as into a wine-jar and flows through all of them completely in their every part. As the body of a man becomes full of the touch and exultation of strong wine, so all the physical system becomes full of the touch and exultation of this divine Ananda. The words *prabhu* and *vibhu* in the Veda are used not in the later sense, "lord", but in a fixed psychological significance like *pracetas* and *vicetas* or like *prajñāna* and *vijñāna* in the later language. "Vibhu" means becoming, or coming into existence pervasively, "prabhu" becoming, coming into existence in front of the consciousness, at a particular point as a particular object or experience. Soma comes out like the wine dropping from the strainer and then pervading the jar; it emerges into the consciousness concentrated at some particular point, *prabhu*, or as

some particular experience and then pervades the whole being as Ananda, *vibhu*.

But it is not every human system that can hold, sustain and enjoy the potent and often violent ecstasy of that divine delight. *Ataptatanūr na tad āmo aśnute*, he who is raw and his body not heated does not taste or enjoy that; *śṛtāsa id vahantas tat samāśata*, only those who have been baked in the fire bear and entirely enjoy that. The wine of the divine Life poured into the system is a strong, overflooding and violent ecstasy; it cannot be held in the system unprepared for it by strong endurance of the utmost fires of life and suffering and experience. The raw earthen vessel not baked to consistency in the fire of the kiln cannot hold the Soma-wine; it breaks and spills the precious liquid. So the physical system of the man who drinks this strong wine of Ananda must by suffering and conquering all the torturing heats of life have been prepared for the secret and fiery heats of the Soma; otherwise his conscious being will not be able to hold it; it will spill and lose it as soon as or even before it is tasted or it will break down mentally and physically under the touch.

This strong and fiery wine has to be purified and the strainer for its purifying has been spread out wide to receive it in the seat of heaven, *tapoṣ pavitraṁ vitataṁ divas pade*; its threads or fibres are all of pure light and stand out like rays, *śocanto asya tantavo vyasthiran*. Through these fibres the wine has to come streaming. The image evidently refers to the purified mental and emotional consciousness, the conscious heart, *cetas*, whose thoughts and emotions are the threads or fibres. Dyaus or Heaven is the pure mental principle not subjected to the reactions of the nerves and the body. In the seat of Heaven, — the pure mental being as distinguished from the vital and physical consciousness, — the thoughts and emotions become pure rays of true perception and happy psychical vibration instead of the troubled and obscured mental, emotional and sensational reactions that we now possess. Instead of being contracted and quivering things defending themselves from pain and excess of the shocks of experience they stand out free, strong and bright, happily extended to receive and turn into divine ecstasy all

possible contacts of universal existence. Therefore it is *divas pade*, in the seat of Heaven, that the Soma-strainer is spread out to receive the Soma.

Thus received and purified these keen and violent juices, these swift and intoxicating powers of the Wine no longer disturb the mind or hurt the body, are no longer spilled and lost but foster and increase, *avanti*, mind and body of their purifier; *avantyasya pavītāram āśavo*. So increasing him in all delight of his mental, emotional, sensational and physical being they rise with him through the purified and blissful heart to the highest level or surface of heaven, that is, to the luminous world of Swar where the mind capable of intuition, inspiration, revelation is bathed in the splendours of the Truth (*ṛtam*), liberated into the infinity of the Vast (*bṛhat*). *Divas pṛṣṭham adhi tiṣṭhanti cetasā.*

So far the Rishi has spoken of Soma in his impersonal manifestation, as the Ananda or delight of divine existence in the human being's conscious experience. He now turns, as is the habit of the Vedic Rishis, from the divine manifestation to the divine Person and at once Soma appears as the supreme Personality, the high and universal Deva. *Arūrucad uṣasaḥ pṛśnir agriyaḥ*; the supreme dappled One, he makes the dawns to shine: *ukṣā bibharti bhuvanāni vājayuḥ*; he, the Bull, bears the worlds, seeking the plenitude. The word *pṛśniḥ*, dappled, is used both of the Bull, the supreme Male, and of the Cow, the female Energy; like all words of colour, *śveta*, *śukra*, *hari*, *harit*, *kṛṣṇa*, *hiraṇyaya*, in the Veda it is symbolic; colour, *varṇa*, has always denoted quality, temperament, etc., in the language of the Mystics. The dappled Bull is the Deva in the variety of his manifestation, many-hued. Soma is that first supreme dappled Bull, generator of the worlds of the becoming, for from the Ananda, from the all-blissful One they all proceed; delight is the parent of the variety of existences. He is the Bull, *ukṣan*, a word which like its synonym *vṛṣan*, means diffusing, generating, impregnating, the father of abundance, the Bull, the Male; it is he who fertilises Force of consciousness, Nature, the Cow, and produces and bears in his stream of abundance the worlds. He makes the Dawns shine out, — the dawns of illumination, mothers of the

radiant herds of the Sun; and he seeks the plenitude, that is to say the fullness of being, force, consciousness, the plenty of the godhead which is the condition of the divine delight. In other words it is the Lord of the Ananda who gives us the splendours of the Truth and the plenitudes of the Vast by which we attain to Immortality.

The fathers who discovered the Truth, received his creative knowledge, his Maya, and by that ideal and ideative consciousness of the supreme Divinity they formed an image of Him in man, they established Him in the race as a child unborn, a seed of the godhead in man, a Birth that has to be delivered out of the envelope of the human consciousness. *Māyāvino mamire asya māyayā, nṛcakṣasaḥ pitaro garbham ā dadhuḥ*. The fathers are the ancient Rishis who discovered the Way of the Vedic mystics and are supposed to be still spiritually present presiding over the destinies of the race and, like the gods, working in man for his attainment to Immortality. They are the sages who received the strong divine vision, *nṛcakṣasaḥ*, the Truth-vision by which they were able to find the Cows hidden by the Panis and to pass beyond the bounds of the Rodasi, the mental and physical consciousness, to the Superconscient, the Vast Truth and the Bliss (R.V. I.36.7, IV.1.13-18, IV.2.15-18 etc.).

Soma is the Gandharva, the Lord of the hosts of delight, and guards the true seat of the Deva, the level or plane of the Ananda; *gandharva itthā padam asya rakṣati*. He is the Supreme, standing out from all other beings and over them, other than they and wonderful, *adbhuta*, and as the supreme and transcendent, present in the worlds but exceeding them, he protects in those worlds the births of the gods, *pāti devānāṁ janimāni adbhutaḥ*. The "births of the gods" is a common phrase in the Veda by which is meant the manifestation of the divine principles in the cosmos and especially the formation of the godhead in its manifold forms in the human being. In the last verse the Rishi spoke of the Deva as the divine child preparing for birth, involved in the world, in the human consciousness. Here he speaks of Him as the transcendent guarding the world of the Ananda formed in man and the forms of the godhead

born in him by the divine knowledge against the attacks of the enemies, the powers of division, the powers of undelight (*dviṣaḥ*, *arātīḥ*), against the undivine hosts with their formations of a dark and false creative knowledge, Avidya, illusion, (*adevīr māyāḥ*).

For he seizes these invading enemies in the net of the inner consciousness; he is the master of a profounder and truer setting of world-truth and world-experience than that which is formed by the senses and the superficial mind. It is by this inner setting that he seizes the powers of falsehood, obscurity and division and subjects them to the law of truth, light and unity; *gṛbhṇāti ripuṁ nidhayā nidhāpatiḥ*. Men therefore protected by the lord of the Ananda governing this inner nature are able to accord their thoughts and actions with the inner truth and light and are no longer made to stumble by the forces of the outer crookedness; they walk straight, they become entirely perfect in their works and by this truth of inner working and outer action are able to taste the entire sweetness of existence, the honey, the delight that is the food of the soul. *Sukṛttamā madhuno bhakṣam āśata*.

Soma manifests here as the offering, the divine food, the wine of delight and immortality, *haviḥ*, and as the Deva, lord of that divine offering (*haviṣmaḥ*), above as the vast and divine seat, the superconscient bliss and truth, *bṛhat*, from which the wine descends to us. As the wine of delight he flows about and enters into this great march of the sacrifice which is the progress of man from the physical to the superconscient. He enters into it and encompasses it wearing the cloud of the heavenly ether, *nabhas*, the mental principle, as his robe and veil. *Havir haviṣmo mahi sadma daivyaṁ, nabho vasānaḥ pari yāsi adhvaram*. The divine delight comes to us wearing the luminous-cloudy veil of the forms of mental experience.

In that march or sacrificial ascent the all-blissful Deva becomes the King of all our activities, master of our divinised nature and its energies and with the enlightened conscious heart as his chariot ascends into the plenitude of the infinite and

immortal state. Like a Sun or a fire, as Surya, as Agni, engirt with a thousand blazing energies he conquers the vast regions of the inspired truth, the superconscient knowledge; *rājā pavitraratho vājam āruhaḥ, sahasrabhṛṣṭir jayasi śravo bṛhat.* The image is that of a victorious king, sun-like in force and glory, conquering a wide territory. It is the immortality that he wins for man in the vast truth-consciousness, *śravas*, upon which is founded the immortal state. It is his own true seat, *itthā padam asya*, that the God concealed in man conquers ascending out of the darkness and the twilight through the glories of the Dawn into the solar plenitudes.

* * *

With this hymn I close this series of selected hymns from the Rig Veda. My object has been to show in as brief a compass as possible the real functions of the Vedic gods, the sense of the symbols in which their cult is expressed, the nature of the sacrifice and its goal, explaining by actual examples the secret of the Veda. I have purposely selected a few brief and easy hymns, and avoided those which have a more striking depth, subtlety and complexity of thought and image, — alike those which bear the psychological sense plainly and fully on their surface and those which by their very strangeness and profundity reveal their true character of mystic and sacred poems. It is hoped that these examples will be sufficient to show the reader who cares to study them with an open mind the real sense of this, our earliest and greatest poetry. By other translations of a more general character it will be shown that these ideas are not merely the highest thought of a few Rishis, but the pervading sense and teaching of the Rig Veda.

Part Three

Hymns of the Atris

Foreword

TO TRANSLATE the Veda is to border upon an attempt at the impossible. For while a literal English rendering of the hymns of the ancient Illuminates would be a falsification of their sense and spirit, a version which aimed at bringing all the real thought to the surface would be an interpretation rather than a translation. I have essayed a sort of middle path, — a free and plastic form which shall follow the turns of the original and yet admit a certain number of interpretative devices sufficient for the light of the Vedic truth to gleam out from its veil of symbol and image.

The Veda is a book of esoteric symbols, almost of spiritual formulae, which masks itself as a collection of ritual poems. The inner sense is psychological, universal, impersonal; the ostensible significance and the figures which were meant to reveal to the initiates what they concealed from the ignorant, are to all appearance crudely concrete, intimately personal, loosely occasional and allusive. To this lax outer garb the Vedic poets are sometimes careful to give a clear and coherent form quite other than the strenuous inner soul of their meaning; their language then becomes a cunningly woven mask for hidden truths. More often they are negligent of the disguise which they use, and when they thus rise above their instrument, a literal and external translation gives either a bizarre, unconnected sequence of sentences or a form of thought and speech strange and remote to the uninitiated intelligence. It is only when the figures and symbols are made to suggest their concealed equivalents that there emerges out of the obscurity a transparent and well-linked though close and subtle sequence of spiritual, psychological and religious ideas. It is this method of suggestion that I have attempted.

It would have been possible to present a literal version on

condition of following it up by pages of commentary charged with the real sense of the words and the hidden message of the thought. But this would be a cumbrous method useful only to the scholar and the careful student. Some form of the sense was needed which would compel only so much pause of the intelligence over its object as would be required by any mystic and figurative poetry. To bring about such a form it is not enough to translate the Sanskrit word into the English; the significant name, the conventional figure, the symbolic image have also frequently to be rendered.

If the images preferred by the ancient sages had been such as the modern mind could easily grasp, if the symbols of the sacrifice were still familiar to us and the names of the Vedic gods still carried their old psychological significance, — as the Greek or Latin names of classical deities, Aphrodite or Ares, Venus or Minerva, still bear their sense for a cultured European, — the device of an interpretative translation could have been avoided. But India followed another curve of literary and religious development than the culture of the West. Other names of Gods have replaced the Vedic names or else these have remained but with only an external and diminished significance; the Vedic ritual, well-nigh obsolete, has lost its profound symbolic meaning; the pastoral, martial and rural images of the early Aryan poets sound remote, inappropriate, or, if natural and beautiful, yet void of the old deeper significance to the imagination of their descendants. Confronted with the stately hymns of the ancient dawn, we are conscious of a blank incomprehension. And we leave them as a prey to the ingenuity of the scholar who gropes for forced meanings amid obscurities and incongruities where the ancients bathed their souls in harmony and light.

A few examples will show what the gulf is and how it was created. When we write in a recognised and conventional imagery, "Laxmi and Saraswati refuse to dwell under one roof", the European reader may need a note or a translation of the phrase into its plain unfigured thought, "Wealth and Learning seldom go together", before he can understand, but every Indian already possesses the sense of the phrase. But if another culture

and religion had replaced the Puranic and Brahminical and the old books and the Sanskrit language had ceased to be read and understood, this now familiar phrase would have been as meaningless in India as in Europe. Some infallible commentator or ingenious scholar might have been proving to our entire satisfaction that Laxmi was the Dawn and Saraswati the Night or that they were two irreconcilable chemical substances — or one knows not what else! It is something of this kind that has overtaken the ancient clarities of the Veda; the sense is dead and only the obscurity of a forgotten poetic form remains. Therefore when we read "Sarama by the path of the Truth discovers the herds", the mind is stopped and baffled by an unfamiliar language. It has to be translated to us, like the phrase about Saraswati to the European, into a plainer and less figured thought, "Intuition by the way of the Truth arrives at the hidden illuminations." Lacking the clue, we wander into ingenuities about the Dawn and the Sun or even imagine in Sarama, the hound of heaven, a mythological personification of some prehistoric embassy to Dravidian nations for the recovery of plundered cattle!

And the whole of the Veda is conceived in such images. The resultant obscurity and confusion for our intelligence is appalling and it will be at once evident how useless would be any translation of the hymns which did not strive at the same time to be an interpretation. "Dawn and Night," runs an impressive Vedic verse, "two sisters of different forms but of one mind, suckle the same divine Child." We understand nothing. Dawn and Night are of different forms, but why of one mind? And who is the child? If it is Agni, the fire, what are we to understand by Dawn and Night suckling alternately an infant fire? But the Vedic poet is not thinking of the physical night, the physical dawn or the physical fire. He is thinking of the alternations in his own spiritual experience, its constant rhythm of periods of a sublime and golden illumination and other periods of obscuration or relapse into normal unillumined consciousness and he confesses the growth of the infant strength of the divine life within him through all these alternations and even by the very force of their regular vicissitude. For in both states there

works, hidden or manifest, the same divine intention and the same high-reaching labour. Thus an image which to the Vedic mind was clear, luminous, subtle, profound, striking, comes to us void of sense or poor and incoherent in sense and therefore affects us as inflated and pretentious, the ornament of an inapt and bungling literary craftsmanship.

So too when the seer of the house of Atri cries high to Agni, "O Agni, O Priest of the offering, loose from us the cords," he is using not only a natural, but a richly-laden image. He is thinking of the triple cord of mind, nerves and body by which the soul is bound as a victim in the great world-sacrifice, the sacrifice of the Purusha; he is thinking of the force of the divine Will already awakened and at work within him, a fiery and irresistible godhead that shall uplift his oppressed divinity and cleave asunder the cords of its bondage; he is thinking of the might of that growing Strength and inner Flame which receiving all that he has to offer carries it to its own distant and difficult home, to the high-seated Truth, to the Far, to the Secret, to the Supreme. All these associations are lost to us; our minds are obsessed by ideas of a ritual sacrifice and a material cord. We imagine perhaps the son of Atri bound as a victim in an ancient barbaric sacrifice, crying to the god of Fire for a physical deliverance!

A little later the seer sings of the increasing Flame, "Agni shines wide with vast Light and makes all things manifest by his greatness." What are we to understand? Shall we suppose that the singer released from his bonds, one knows not how, is admiring tranquilly the great blaze of the sacrificial fire which was to have devoured him and wonder at the rapid transitions of the primitive mind? It is only when we discover that the "vast Light" was a fixed phrase in the language of the Mystics for a wide, free and luminous consciousness beyond mind, that we seize the true burden of the Rik. The seer is hymning his release from the triple cord of mind, nerves and body and the uprising of the knowledge and will within him to a plane of consciousness where the real truth of all things transcendent of their apparent truth becomes at length manifest in a vast illumination.

But how are we to bring home this profound, natural and inner sense to the minds of others in a translation? It cannot be done unless we translate interpretatively, "O Will, O Priest of our sacrifice, loose from us the cords of our bondage" and "this Flame shines out with the vast Light of the Truth and makes all things manifest by its greatness." The reader will then at least be able to seize the spiritual nature of the cord, the light, the flame; he will feel something of the sense and spirit of this ancient chant.

The method I have employed will be clear from these instances. I have sometimes thrown aside the image, but not so as to demolish the whole structure of the outer symbol or to substitute a commentary for a translation. It would have been an undesirable violence to strip from the richly jewelled garb of the Vedic thought its splendid ornaments or to replace it by a coarse garment of common speech. But I have endeavoured to make it everywhere as transparent as possible. I have rendered the significant names of the Gods, Kings, Rishis by their half-concealed significances, — otherwise the mask would have remained impenetrable; where the image was unessential, I have sometimes sacrificed it for its psychological equivalent; where it influenced the colour of the surrounding words, I have sought for some phrase which would keep the figure and yet bring out its whole complexity of sense. Sometimes I have even used a double translation. Thus for the Vedic word which means at once light or ray and cow, I have given according to the circumstances "Light", "the radiances", "the shining herds", "the radiant kine", "Light, mother of the herds". Soma, the ambrosial wine of the Veda, has been rendered "wine of delight" or "wine of immortality".

The Vedic language as a whole is a powerful and remarkable instrument, terse, knotted, virile, packed, and in its turns careful rather to follow the natural flight of the thought in the mind than to achieve the smooth and careful constructions and the clear transitions of a logical and rhetorical syntax. But translated without modification into English such a language would become harsh, abrupt and obscure, a dead and heavy movement

with nothing in it of the morning vigour and puissant stride of the original. I have therefore preferred to throw it in translation into a mould more plastic and natural to the English tongue, using the constructions and devices of transition which best suit a modern speech while preserving the logic of the original thought; and I have never hesitated to reject the bald dictionary equivalent of the Vedic word for an ampler phrase in the English where that was necessary to bring out the full sense and associations. Throughout I have kept my eye fixed on my primary object — to make the inner sense of the Veda seizable by the cultured intelligence of today.

When all has been done, the aid of some amount of annotation remained still indispensable; but I have tried not to overburden the translation with notes or to indulge in overlong explanations. I have excluded everything scholastic. In the Veda there are numbers of words of a doubtful meaning, many locutions whose sense can only be speculatively or provisionally fixed, not a few verses capable of two or more different interpretations. But a translation of this kind is not the place for any record of the scholar's difficulties and hesitations. I have also prefixed a brief outline of the main Vedic thought indispensable to the reader who wishes to understand.

He will expect only to seize the general trend and surface suggestions of the Vedic hymns. More would be hardly possible. To enter into the very heart of the mystic doctrine, we must ourselves have trod the ancient paths and renewed the lost discipline, the forgotten experience. And which of us can hope to do that with any depth or living power? Who in this Age of Iron shall have the strength to recover the light of the Forefathers or soar above the two enclosing firmaments of mind and body into their luminous empyrean of the infinite Truth? The Rishis sought to conceal their knowledge from the unfit, believing perhaps that the corruption of the best might lead to the worst and fearing to give the potent wine of the Soma to the child and the weakling. But whether their spirits still move among us looking for the rare Aryan soul in a mortality that is content to leave the radiant herds of the Sun for ever imprisoned

in the darkling cave of the Lords of the sense-life or whether they await in their luminous world the hour when the Maruts shall again drive abroad and the Hound of Heaven shall once again speed down to us from beyond the rivers of Paradise and the seals of the heavenly waters shall be broken and the caverns shall be rent and the immortalising wine shall be pressed out in the body of man by the electric thunderstones, their secret remains safe to them. Small is the chance that in an age which blinds our eyes with the transient glories of the outward life and deafens our ears with the victorious trumpets of a material and mechanical knowledge many shall cast more than the eye of an intellectual and imaginative curiosity on the passwords of their ancient discipline or seek to penetrate into the heart of their radiant mysteries. The secret of the Veda, even when it has been unveiled, remains still a secret.

The Doctrine of the Mystics

THE VEDA possesses the high spiritual substance of the Upanishads, but lacks their phraseology; it is an inspired knowledge as yet insufficiently equipped with intellectual and philosophical terms. We find a language of poets and illuminates to whom all experience is real, vivid, sensible, even concrete, not yet of thinkers and systematisers to whom the realities of the mind and soul have become abstractions. Yet a system, a doctrine there is; but its structure is supple, its terms are concrete, the cast of its thought is practical and experimental, but in the accomplished type of an old and sure experience, not of one that is crude and uncertain because yet in the making. Here we have the ancient psychological science and the art of spiritual living of which the Upanishads are the philosophical outcome and modification and Vedanta, Sankhya and Yoga the late intellectual result and logical dogma. But like all life, like all science that is still vital, it is free from the armoured rigidities of the reasoning intellect; in spite of its established symbols and sacred formulae it is still large, free, flexible, fluid, supple and subtle. It has the movement of life and the large breath of the soul. And while the later philosophies are books of Knowledge and make liberation the one supreme good, the Veda is a Book of Works and the hope for which it spurns our present bonds and littleness is perfection, self-achievement, immortality.

The doctrine of the Mystics recognises an Unknowable, Timeless and Unnameable behind and above all things and not seizable by the studious pursuit of the mind. Impersonally, it is That, the One Existence; to the pursuit of our personality it reveals itself out of the secrecy of things as the God or Deva, — nameless though he has many names, immeasurable and beyond description, though he holds in himself all description of name

and knowledge and all measures of form and substance, force and activity.

The Deva or Godhead is both the original cause and the final result. Divine Existent, builder of the worlds, lord and begetter of all things, Male and Female, Being and Consciousness, Father and Mother of the Worlds and their inhabitants, he is also their Son and ours: for he is the Divine Child born into the Worlds who manifests himself in the growth of the creature. He is Rudra and Vishnu, Prajapati and Hiranyagarbha, Surya, Agni, Indra, Vayu, Soma, Brihaspati, — Varuna and Mitra and Bhaga and Aryaman, all the gods. He is the wise, mighty and liberating Son born from our works and our sacrifice, the Hero in our warfare and Seer of our knowledge, the White Steed in the front of our days who gallops towards the upper Ocean.

The soul of man soars as the Bird, the Hansa, past the shining firmaments of physical and mental consciousness, climbs as the traveller and fighter beyond earth of body and heaven of mind by the ascending path of the Truth to find this Godhead waiting for us, leaning down to us from the secrecy of the highest supreme where it is seated in the triple divine Principle and the source of the Beatitude. The Deva is indeed, whether attracting and exalted there or here helpful to us in the person of the greater Gods, always the Friend and Lover of man, the pastoral Master of the Herds who gives us the sweet milk and the clarified butter from the udder of the shining Cow of the infinitude. He is the source and outpourer of the ambrosial Wine of divine delight and we drink it drawn from the sevenfold waters of existence or pressed out from the luminous plant on the hill of being and uplifted by its raptures we become immortal.

Such are some of the images of this ancient mystic adoration.

The Godhead has built this universe in a complex system of worlds which we find both within us and without, subjectively cognised and objectively sensed. It is a rising tier of earths and heavens; it is a stream of diverse waters; it is a Light of seven rays, or of eight or nine or ten; it is a Hill of many plateaus. The seers often image it in a series of trios; there are three earths and

three heavens. More, there is a triple world below, — Heaven, Earth and the intervening mid-region; a triple world between, the shining heavens of the Sun; a triple world above, the supreme and rapturous abodes of the Godhead.

But other principles intervene and make the order of the worlds yet more complex. These principles are psychological; for since all creation is a formation of the Spirit, every external system of worlds must in each of its planes be in material correspondence with some power or rising degree of consciousness of which it is the objective symbol and must house a kindred internal order of things. To understand the Veda we must seize this Vedic parallelism and distinguish the cosmic gradations to which it leads. We rediscover the same system behind the later Puranic symbols and it is thence that we can derive its tabulated series most simply and clearly. For there are seven principles of existence and the seven Puranic worlds correspond to them with sufficient precision, thus: —

	Principle	*World*
1.	Pure Existence — Sat	World of the highest truth of being (Satyaloka)
2.	Pure Consciousness — Chit	World of infinite Will or conscious force (Tapoloka)
3.	Pure Bliss — Ananda	World of creative delight of existence (Janaloka)
4.	Knowledge or Truth — Vijnana	World of the Vastness (Maharloka)
5.	Mind	World of light (Swar)
6.	Life (nervous being)	Worlds of various becoming (Bhuvar)
7.	Matter	The material world (Bhur)

Now this system which in the Purana is simple enough, is a good deal more intricate in the Veda. There the three highest worlds are classed together as the triple divine Principle, — for they dwell always together in a Trinity; infinity is their scope, bliss is their foundation. They are supported by the vast regions

of the Truth whence a divine Light radiates out towards our mentality in the three heavenly luminous worlds of Swar, the domain of Indra. Below is ranked the triple system in which we live.

We have the same cosmic gradations as in the Puranas but they are differently grouped, — seven worlds in principle, five in practice, three in their general groupings:

1. The Supreme Sat-Chit-Ananda	The triple divine worlds
2. The Link-World Supermind	The Truth, Right, Vast, manifested in Swar, with its three luminous heavens
3. The triple lower world	
Pure Mind	Heaven (Dyaus, the three heavens)
Life-force	The Mid-Region (Antariksha)
Matter	Earth (the three earths)

And as each principle can be modified by the subordinate manifestation of the others within it, each world is divisible into several provinces according to different arrangements and self-orderings of its creative light of consciousness. Into this framework, then, we must place all the complexities of the subtle vision and fertile imagery of the seers down to the hundred cities which are now in the possession of the hostile kings, the Lords of division and evil. But the gods shall break them open and give them for his free possession to the Aryan worshipper!

But where are these worlds and whence are they created? Here we have one of the profoundest ideas of the Vedic sages. Man dwells in the bosom of the Earth-Mother and is aware of this world of mortality only; but there is a superconscient high beyond where the divine worlds are seated in a luminous secrecy; there is a subconscient or inconscient below his surface waking impressions and from that pregnant Night the worlds as he sees them are born. And these other worlds between the luminous upper and the tenebrous lower ocean? They are here.

Man draws from the life-world his vital being, from the mind-world his mentality; he is ever in secret communication with them; he can consciously enter into them, be born into them, if he will. Even into the solar worlds of the Truth he can rise, enter the portals of the Superconscient, cross the threshold of the Supreme. The divine doors shall swing open to his increasing soul.

This human ascension is possible because every being really holds in himself all that his outward vision perceives as if external to him. We have subjective faculties hidden in us which correspond to all the tiers and strata of the objective cosmic system and these form for us so many planes of our possible existence. This material life and our narrowly limited consciousness of the physical world are far from being the sole experience permitted to man, — be he a thousand times the Son of Earth. If maternal Earth bore him and retains him in her arms, yet is Heaven also one of his parents and has a claim on his being. It is open to him to become awake to profounder depths and higher heights within and such awakening is his intended progress. And as he mounts thus to higher and ever higher planes of himself, new worlds open to his life and his vision and become the field of his experience and the home of his spirit. He lives in contact and union with their powers and godheads and remoulds himself in their image. Each ascent is thus a new birth of the soul, and the Veda calls the worlds "births" as well as seats and dwelling-places.

For as the Gods have built the series of the cosmic worlds, even so they labour to build up the same series of ordered states and ascending degrees in man's consciousness from the mortal condition to the crowning immortality. They raise him from the limited material state of being in which our lowest manhood dwells contented and subject to the Lords of Division, give him a life rich and abundant with the many and rapid shocks and impulsions from the dynamic worlds of Life and Desire where the Gods battle with the demons and raise him yet higher from those troubled rapidities and intensities into the steadfast purity and clarity of the high mental existence. For pure thought and

feeling are man's sky, his heaven; this whole vitalistic existence of emotion, passions, affections of which desire is the pivot, forms for him a mid-world; body and material living are his earth.

But pure thought and pure psychic state are not the highest height of the human ascension. The home of the Gods is an absolute Truth which lives in solar glories beyond mind. Man ascending thither strives no longer as the thinker but is victoriously the seer; he is no longer this mental creature but a divine being. His will, life, thought, emotion, sense, act are all transformed into values of an all-puissant Truth and remain no longer an embarrassed or a helpless tangle of mixed truth and falsehood. He moves lamely no more in our narrow and grudging limits but ranges in the unobstructed Vast; toils and zigzags no longer amid these crookednesses, but follows a swift and conquering straightness; feeds no longer on broken fragments, but is suckled by the teats of Infinity. Therefore he has to break through and out beyond these firmaments of earth and heaven; conquering firm possession of the solar worlds, entering on to his highest Height he has to learn how to dwell in the triple principle of Immortality.

This contrast of the mortality we are and the immortal condition to which we can aspire is the key of the Vedic thought and practice. Veda is the earliest gospel we have of man's immortality and these ancient stanzas conceal the primitive discipline of its inspired discoverers.

Substance of being, light of consciousness, active force and possessive delight are the constituent principles of existence; but their combination in us may be either limited, divided, hurt, broken and obscure or infinite, enlightened, vast, whole and unhurt. Limited and divided being is ignorance; it is darkness and weakness, it is grief and pain; in the Vast, in the integral, in the infinite we must seek for the desirable riches of substance, light, force and joy. Limitation is mortality; immortality comes to us as an accomplished self-possession in the infinite and the power to live and move in firm vastnesses. Therefore it is in proportion as he widens and on condition that he increases constantly in

substance of his being, brightens an ever loftier flame of will and vaster light of knowledge, advances the boundaries of his consciousness, raises the degrees and enlarges the breadth of his power, force and strength, confirms an intenser beatitude of joy and liberates his soul into immeasurable peace that man becomes capable of immortality.

To widen is to acquire new births. The aspiring material creature becomes the straining vital man; he in turn transmutes himself into the subtle mental and psychical being; this subtle thinker grows into the wide, multiple and cosmic man open on all sides of him to all the multitudinous inflowings of the Truth; the cosmic soul rising in attainment strives as the spiritual man for a higher peace, joy and harmony. These are the five Aryan types, each of them a great people occupying its own province or state of the total human nature. But there is also the absolute Aryan who would conquer and pass beyond these states to the transcendental harmony of them all.

It is the supramental Truth that is the instrument of this great inner transfiguration. That replaces mentality by luminous vision and the eye of the gods, mortal life by breath and force of the infinite existence, obscure and death-possessed substance by the free and immortal conscious-being. The progress of man must be therefore, first, his self-expanding into a puissant vitality capable of sustaining all vibrations of action and experience and a clear mental and psychical purity; secondly, an outgrowing of this human light and power and its transmutation into an infinite Truth and an immortal Will.

Our normal life and consciousness are a dark or at best a starlit Night. Dawn comes by the arising of the Sun of that higher Truth and with Dawn there comes the effective sacrifice. By the sacrifice the Dawn itself and the lost Sun are constantly conquered out of the returning Night and the luminous herds rescued from the darkling cave of the Panis; by the sacrifice the rain of the abundance of heaven is poured out for us and the sevenfold waters of the higher existence descend impetuously upon our earth because the coils of the obscuring Python, the all-enfolding and all-withholding Vritra, have been cloven asunder

by the God-Mind's flashing lightnings; in the sacrifice the Soma wine is distilled and uplifts us on the stream of its immortalising ecstasy to the highest heavens.

Our sacrifice is the offering of all our gains and works to the powers of the higher existence. The whole world is a dumb and helpless sacrifice in which the soul is bound as a victim self-offered to unseen Gods. The liberating Word must be found, the illuminating hymn must be framed in the heart and mind of man and his life must be turned into a conscious and voluntary offering in which the soul is no longer the victim, but the master of the sacrifice. By right sacrifice and by the all-creative and all-expressive Word that shall arise out of his depths as a sublime hymn to the Gods man can achieve all things. He shall conquer his perfection; Nature shall come to him as a willing and longing bride; he shall become her seer and rule her as her King.

By the hymn of prayer and God-attraction, by the hymn of praise and God-affirmation, by the hymn of God-attainment and self-expression man can house in himself the Gods, build in this gated house of his being the living image of their deity, grow into divine births, form within himself vast and luminous worlds for his soul to inhabit. By the word of the Truth the all-engendering Surya creates; by that rhythm Brahmanaspati evokes the worlds and Twashtri fashions them; finding the all-puissant Word in his intuitive heart, shaping it in his mind the human thinker, the mortal creature can create in himself all the forms, all the states and conditions he desires and, achieving, can conquer for himself all wealth of being, light, strength and enjoyment. He builds up his integral being and aids his gods to destroy the evil armies; the hosts of his spiritual enemies are slain who have divided, torn and afflicted his nature.

The image of this sacrifice is sometimes that of a journey or voyage; for it travels, it ascends; it has a goal — the vastness, the true existence, the light, the felicity — and it is called upon to discover and keep the good, the straight and the happy path to the goal, the arduous, yet joyful road of the Truth. It has to climb, led by the flaming strength of the divine Will, from

plateau to plateau as of a mountain, it has to cross as in a ship the waters of existence, traverse its rivers, overcome their deep pits and rapid currents; its aim is to arrive at the far-off ocean of light and infinity.

And this is no easy or peaceful march; it is for long seasons a fierce and relentless battle. Constantly the Aryan man has to labour and to fight and conquer; he must be a tireless toiler and traveller and a stern warrior, he must force open and storm and sack city after city, win kingdom after kingdom, overthrow and tread down ruthlessly enemy after enemy. His whole progress is a warring of Gods and Titans, Gods and Giants, Indra and the Python, Aryan and Dasyu. Aryan adversaries even he has to face in the open field; for old friends and helpers turn into enemies; the kings of Aryan states he would conquer and overpass join themselves to the Dasyus and are leagued against him in supreme battle to prevent his free and utter passing on.

But the Dasyu is the natural enemy. These dividers, plunderers, harmful powers, these Danavas, sons of the Mother of division, are spoken of by the Rishis under many general appellations. There are Rakshasas; there are Eaters and Devourers, Wolves and Tearers; there are hurters and haters; there are dualisers; there are confiners or censurers. But we are given also many specific names. Vritra, the Serpent, is the grand Adversary; for he obstructs with his coils of darkness all possibility of divine existence and divine action. And even when Vritra is slain by the light, fiercer enemies arise out of him. Shushna afflicts us with his impure and ineffective force, Namuchi fights man by his weaknesses, and others too assail, each with his proper evil. Then there are Vala and the Panis, miser traffickers in the sense-life, stealers and concealers of the higher Light and its illuminations which they can only darken and misuse, — an impious host who are jealous of their store and will not offer sacrifice to the Gods. These and other personalities — they are much more than personifications — of our ignorance, evil, weakness and many limitations make constant war upon man; they encircle him from near or they shoot their arrows at him from afar or even dwell in his gated house in the place of the

Gods and with their shapeless stammering mouths and their insufficient breath of force mar his self-expression. They must be expelled, overpowered, slain, thrust down into their nether darkness by the aid of the mighty and helpful deities.

The Vedic deities are names, powers, personalities of the universal Godhead and they represent each some essential puissance of the Divine Being. They manifest the cosmos and are manifest in it. Children of Light, Sons of the Infinite, they recognise in the soul of man their brother and ally and desire to help and increase him by themselves increasing in him so as to possess his world with their light, strength and beauty. The Gods call man to a divine companionship and alliance; they attract and uplift him to their luminous fraternity, invite his aid and offer theirs against the Sons of Darkness and Division. Man in return calls the Gods to his sacrifice, offers to them his swiftnesses and his strengths, his clarities and his sweetnesses, — milk and butter of the shining Cow, distilled juices of the Plant of Joy, the Horse of the Sacrifice, the cake and the wine, the grain for the God-Mind's radiant coursers. He receives them into his being and their gifts into his life, increases them by the hymn and the wine and forms perfectly — as a smith forges iron, says the Veda — their great and luminous godheads.

All this Vedic imagery is easy to understand when once we have the key, but it must not be mistaken for mere imagery. The Gods are not simply poetical personifications of abstract ideas or of psychological and physical functions of Nature. To the Vedic seers they are living realities; the vicissitudes of the human soul represent a cosmic struggle not merely of principles and tendencies but of the cosmic Powers which support and embody them. These are the Gods and the Demons. On the world-stage and in the individual soul the same real drama with the same personages is enacted.

To what gods shall the sacrifice be offered? Who shall be invoked to manifest and protect in the human being this increasing godhead?

Agni first, for without him the sacrificial flame cannot burn

on the altar of the soul. That flame of Agni is the seven-tongued power of the Will, a Force of God instinct with knowledge. This conscious and forceful will is the immortal guest in our mortality, a pure priest and a divine worker, the mediator between earth and heaven. It carries what we offer to the higher Powers and brings back in return their force and light and joy into our humanity.

Indra, the Puissant next, who is the power of pure Existence self-manifested as the Divine Mind. As Agni is one pole of Force instinct with knowledge that sends its current upward from earth to heaven, so Indra is the other pole of Light instinct with force which descends from heaven to earth. He comes down into our world as the Hero with the shining horses and slays darkness and division with his lightnings, pours down the life-giving heavenly waters, finds in the trace of the hound, Intuition, the lost or hidden illuminations, makes the Sun of Truth mount high in the heaven of our mentality.

Surya, the Sun, is the master of that supreme Truth, — truth of being, truth of knowledge, truth of process and act and movement and functioning. He is therefore the creator or rather the manifester of all things — for creation is outbringing, expression by the Truth and Will — and the father, fosterer, enlightener of our souls. The illuminations we seek are the herds of this Sun who comes to us in the track of the divine Dawn and releases and reveals in us night-hidden world after world up to the highest Beatitude.

Of that beatitude Soma is the representative deity. The wine of his ecstasy is concealed in the growths of earth, in the waters of existence; even here in our physical being are his immortalising juices and they have to be pressed out and offered to all the gods; for in that strength these shall increase and conquer.

Each of these primary deities has others associated with him who fulfil functions that arise from his own. For if the truth of Surya is to be established firmly in our mortal nature, there are previous conditions that are indispensable; a vast purity and clear wideness destructive of all sin and crooked falsehood, — and this is Varuna; a luminous power of love

and comprehension leading and forming into harmony all our thoughts, acts and impulses, — this is Mitra; an immortal puissance of clear-discerning aspiration and endeavour, — this is Aryaman; a happy spontaneity of the right enjoyment of all things dispelling the evil dream of sin and error and suffering, — this is Bhaga. These four are powers of the Truth of Surya.

For the whole bliss of Soma to be established perfectly in our nature a happy and enlightened and unmaimed condition of mind, vitality and body are necessary. This condition is given to us by the twin Ashwins; wedded to the daughter of Light, drinkers of honey, bringers of perfect satisfactions, healers of maim and malady they occupy our parts of knowledge and parts of action and prepare our mental, vital and physical being for an easy and victorious ascension.

Indra, the Divine Mind, as the shaper of mental forms has for his assistants, his artisans, the Ribhus, human powers who by the work of sacrifice and their brilliant ascension to the high dwelling-place of the Sun have attained to immortality and help mankind to repeat their achievement. They shape by the mind Indra's horses, the Ashwins' chariot, the weapons of the Gods, all the means of the journey and the battle. But as giver of the Light of truth and as Vritra-slayer Indra is aided by the Maruts, who are powers of will and nervous or vital Force that have attained to the light of thought and the voice of self-expression. They are behind all thought and speech as its impellers and they battle towards the Light, Truth and Bliss of the supreme Consciousness.

There are also female energies; for the Deva is both Male and Female and the gods also are either activising souls or passively executive and methodising energies. Aditi, infinite Mother of the gods, comes first; and there are besides five powers of the Truth-consciousness, — Mahi or Bharati, the vast Word that brings us all things out of the divine source; Ila, the strong primal word of the Truth who gives us its active vision; Saraswati, its streaming current and the word of its inspiration; Sarama, the Intuition, hound of heaven who descends into the cavern of the subconscient and finds there the concealed illuminations;

Dakshina, whose function is to discern rightly, dispose the action and the offering and distribute in the sacrifice to each godhead its portion. Each god, too, has his female energy.

All this action and struggle and ascension is supported by Heaven our Father and Earth our Mother, Parents of the Gods, who sustain respectively the purely mental and psychic and the physical consciousness. Their large and free scope is the condition of our achievement. Vayu, Master of life, links them together by the mid-air, the region of vital force. And there are other deities, — Parjanya, giver of the rain of heaven; Dadhikravan, the divine war-horse, a power of Agni; the mystic Dragon of the Foundations; Trita Aptya who on the third plane of existence consummates our triple being; and more besides.

The development of all these godheads is necessary to our perfection. And that perfection must be attained on all our levels, — in the wideness of earth, our physical being and consciousness; in the full force of vital speed and action and enjoyment and nervous vibration, typified as the Horse which must be brought forward to upbear our endeavour; in the perfect gladness of the heart of emotion and a brilliant heat and clarity of the mind throughout our intellectual and psychical being; in the coming of the supramental Light, the Dawn and the Sun and the shining Mother of the herds, to transform all our existence; for so comes to us the possession of the Truth, by the Truth the admirable surge of the Bliss, in the Bliss infinite Consciousness of absolute being.

Three great Gods, origin of the Puranic Trinity, largest puissances of the supreme Godhead, make possible this development and upward evolution; they support in its grand lines and fundamental energies all these complexities of the cosmos. Brahmanaspati is the Creator; by the word, by his cry he creates, — that is to say, he expresses, he brings out all existence and conscious knowledge and movement of life and eventual forms from the darkness of the Inconscient. Rudra, the Violent and Merciful, the Mighty One, presides over the struggle of life to affirm itself; he is the armed, wrathful and beneficent Power of God who lifts forcibly the creation upward, smites all

that opposes, scourges all that errs and resists, heals all that is wounded and suffers and complains and submits. Vishnu of the vast pervading motion holds in his triple stride all these worlds; it is he that makes a wide room for the action of Indra in our limited mortality; it is by him and with him that we rise into his highest seats where we find waiting for us the Friend, the Beloved, the Beatific Godhead.

Our earth shaped out of the dark inconscient ocean of existence lifts its high formations and ascending peaks heavenward; heaven of mind has its own formations, clouds that give out their lightnings and their waters of life; the streams of the clarity and the honey ascend out of the subconscient ocean below and seek the superconscient ocean above; and from above that ocean sends downward its rivers of the light and truth and bliss even into our physical being. Thus in images of physical Nature the Vedic poets sing the hymn of our spiritual ascension.

That ascension has already been effected by the Ancients, the human forefathers, and the spirits of these great Ancestors still assist their offspring; for the new dawns repeat the old and lean forward in light to join the dawns of the future. Kanwa, Kutsa, Atri, Kakshiwan, Gotama, Shunahshepa have become types of certain spiritual victories which tend to be constantly repeated in the experience of humanity. The seven sages, the Angirasas, are waiting still and always, ready to chant the word, to rend the cavern, to find the lost herds, to recover the hidden Sun. Thus the soul is a battlefield full of helpers and hurters, friends and enemies. All this lives, teems, is personal, is conscious, is active. We create for ourselves by the sacrifice and by the word shining seers, heroes to fight for us, children of our works. The Rishis and the Gods find for us our luminous herds; the Ribhus fashion by the mind the chariots of the gods and their horses and their shining weapons. Our life is a horse that neighing and galloping bears us onward and upward; its forces are swift-hooved steeds, the liberated powers of the mind are wide-winging birds; this mental being or this soul is the upsoaring Swan or the Falcon that breaks out from a hundred iron walls and wrests from the jealous guardians of felicity the wine of the Soma. Every shining

godward Thought that arises from the secret abysses of the heart is a priest and a creator and chants a divine hymn of luminous realisation and puissant fulfilment. We seek for the shining gold of the Truth; we lust after a heavenly treasure.

The soul of man is a world full of beings, a kingdom in which armies clash to help or hinder a supreme conquest, a house where the gods are our guests and which the demons strive to possess; the fullness of its energies and wideness of its being make a seat of sacrifice spread, arranged and purified for a celestial session.

Such are some of the principal images of the Veda and a very brief and insufficient outline of the teaching of the Forefathers. So understood the Rig Veda ceases to be an obscure, confused and barbarous hymnal; it becomes the high-aspiring Song of Humanity; its chants are episodes of the lyrical epic of the soul in its immortal ascension.

This at least; what more there may be in the Veda of ancient science, lost knowledge, old psycho-physical tradition remains yet to be discovered.

Hymns to Agni

Agni, the Divine Will-Force

THE NAME of this flaming godhead, Agni, derives from a root whose quality of significance is a preeminent force or intensity whether in state, action, sensation or movement; but the qualities of this essential significance vary. It means a burning brightness, whence its use for fire; it means movement and especially a curving or serpentine movement; it means strength and force, beauty and splendour, leading and preeminence; it developed also certain emotional values which have perished in Sanskrit, but remain in Greek, angry passion on one side, on the other delight and love.

The Vedic deity Agni is the first of the Powers, the pristine and preeminent, that have issued from the vast and secret Godhead. By conscious force of the Godhead the worlds have been created and are governed from within by that hidden and inner Control; Agni is the form, the fire, the forceful heat and flaming will of this Divinity. As a flaming Force of knowledge he descends to build up the worlds and seated within them, a secret deity, initiates movement and action. This divine Conscious Force contains all the other godheads in itself as the nave of a wheel contains its spokes. All puissance of action, strength in the being, beauty of form, splendour of light and knowledge, glory and greatness are the manifestation of Agni. And when he is entirely delivered and fulfilled out of the envelope of the world's crookednesses, this deity of flame and force is revealed as the solar godhead of love and harmony and light, Mitra, who leads men towards the Truth.

But in the Vedic cosmos Agni appears first as a front of divine Force compact of burning heat and light which forms, assails, enters into, envelops, devours, rebuilds all things in Matter. He is no random fire; his is a flame of force instinct with the light of divine knowledge. Agni is the seer-will in the universe unerring

in all its works. Whatever he does in his passion and power is guided by the light of the silent Truth within him. He is a truth-conscious soul, a seer, a priest and a worker, — the immortal worker in man. His mission is to purify all that he works upon and to raise up the soul struggling in Nature from obscurity to the light, from the strife and the suffering to love and joy, from the heat and the labour to the peace and the bliss. He is, then, the Will, the Knowledge-Force of the Deva; secret inhabitant of Matter and its forms, visible and beloved guest of man, it is he that guards the law of the Truth of things in the apparent aberrations and confusions of the world. The other gods awake with the Dawn, but Agni wakes also in the Night; he keeps his divine vision even in the darkness where there is neither moon nor star; the flame of the divine will and knowledge is visible even in the densest obscurity of inconscient or half-conscient things. The infallible worker is there even when we see nowhere the conscious light of the guiding mind.

No sacrifice is possible without Agni. He is at once the flame on the altar and the priest of the oblation. When man, awakened from his night, wills to offer his inner and outer activities to the gods of a truer and higher existence and so to arise out of mortality into the far-off immortality, his goal and his desire, it is this flame of upward aspiring Force and Will that he must kindle; into this fire he must cast the sacrifice. For it is this that offers to the gods and brings down in return all spiritual riches, — the divine waters, the light, the strength, the rain of heaven. This calls, this carries the gods to the house of the sacrifice. Agni is the priest man puts in front as his spiritual representative (*purohita*), a Will, a Force greater, higher, more infallible than his own doing for him the works of the sacrifice, purifying the materials of the oblation, offering them to the gods whom it has summoned to the divine ritual, determining the right order and season of its works, conducting the progress, the march of the sacrificial development. These and other various functions of the symbolic priesthood, represented in the outward sacrifice by different officiating priests, are discharged by the single Agni.

Agni is the leader of the sacrifice and protects it in the great

journey against the powers of darkness. The knowledge and purpose of this divine Puissance can be entirely trusted; he is the friend and lover of the soul and will not betray it to evil gods. Even for the man sitting far off in the night, enveloped by the darkness of the human ignorance, this flame is a light which, when it is perfectly kindled and in proportion as it mounts higher and higher, enlarges itself into the vast light of the Truth. Flaming upward to heaven to meet the divine Dawn, it rises through the vital or nervous mid-world and through our mental skies and enters at last the Paradise of Light, its own supreme home above where joyous for ever in the eternal Truth that is the foundation of the sempiternal Bliss the shining Immortals sit in their celestial sessions and drink the wine of the infinite beatitude.

It is true that here the light is concealed. Agni, like other gods, figures here as a child of the universal parents, Heaven and Earth, Mind and Body, Soul and material Nature. This earth holds him concealed in her own materiality and does not release him for the conscious works of the Father. She hides him in all her growths, her plants, herbs, trees — the forms full of her heats, the objects that keep for the soul its delights. But at last she shall yield him up; she is the lower tinder, the mental being is the upper tinder; by the pressure of the upper on the lower the flame of Agni shall be born. But it is by pressure, by a sort of churning that he is born. Therefore he is called the Son of Force.

Even when Agni emerges, he is outwardly obscure in his workings. He becomes, first, not a pure Will, though really he is always pure, but a vital Will, the desire of the Life in us, a smoke-obscured flame, son of our crookednesses, a Beast grazing in its pasture, a force of devouring desire that feeds upon earth's growths, tears and ravages all upon which it feeds and leaves a black and charred line to mark its path where there was the joy and glory of earth's woodlands. But in all this there is a work of purification, which becomes conscious for the man of sacrifice. Agni destroys and purifies. His very hunger and desire, infinite in its scope, prepares the establishment of a higher universal order. The smoke of his passion is overcome and this vital Will, this burning desire in the Life becomes the Steed that carries us up

to the highest levels, — the white Steed that gallops in the front of the Dawns.

Delivered from his smoke-enveloped activity he burns high in our skies, scales the ether of the pure mind and mounts upon the back of heaven. There on that rarer level its god Trita Aptya takes this high-flaming force and forges it into a weapon of sharpness that shall destroy all evil and ignorance. This Seer-Will becomes the guardian of the illuminations of knowledge — herds of the Sun that graze in the pastures of life secure from the Sons of division and darkness, protected by the warrior force of the Will that knows. He attains the immortality and maintains unhurt its law of truth and joy in the human creature. In the end we overpass all crookednesses of falsehood and error, emerge from the low and broken and devious ground to the straight path and the high and open levels. Will and Knowledge become one; every impulse of the perfected soul becomes conscious of the essential truth of its own self-being, every act fulfils it consciently, joyously, victoriously. Such is the godhead to which the Vedic Fire exalts the Aryan who does the sacrifice. The Immortal conquers in the mortal and by his sacrifice. Man, the thinker, fighter, toiler, becomes a seer, self-ruler and king over Nature.

The Veda speaks of this divine Flame in a series of splendid and opulent images. He is the rapturous priest of the sacrifice, the God-Will intoxicated with its own delight, the young sage, the sleepless envoy, the ever-wakeful flame in the house, the master of our gated dwelling-place, the beloved guest, the lord in the creature, the seer of the flaming tresses, the divine child, the pure and virgin God, the invincible warrior, the leader on the path who marches in front of the human peoples, the immortal in mortals, the worker established in man by the gods, the unobstructed in knowledge, the infinite in being, the vast and flaming sun of the Truth, the sustainer of the sacrifice and discerner of its steps, the divine perception, the light, the vision, the firm foundation. Throughout the Veda it is in the hymns which celebrate this strong and brilliant deity that we find those which are the most splendid in poetic colouring, profound in psychological suggestion and sublime in their mystic intoxication. It is as if his

own flame and cry and light had seized with a burning ecstasy on the imagination of his poets.

Amid this crowd of poetical images there are some of a symbolic character which describe the many births of the divine Flame. They are recounted with an extraordinary variety. Sometimes he is the child of Heaven, the Father — Mind or Soul — and of Earth the Mother — Body or material Nature; sometimes he is the flame born from these two tinders; sometimes Heaven and Earth are called his two mothers, when the figure is more explicitly symbolic of the pure mental and psychical and the physical consciousness. He is also hymned as the child of the seven Mothers — for his complete birth is a result of the manifestation of seven principles which constitute our conscious existence — three spiritual of the infinite, three temporal of the finite, and one intermediate — and which are, respectively, the foundation of the seven worlds. Like other gods, he is said to be born of the Truth; the Truth is at once his birthplace and his home. Sometimes it is said that the Seven Beloved brought him into birth for the Lord; and here the symbol seems to carry back his source to that other principle of pure Bliss which is the original cause of creation. He has one form of the solar light and flame, another heavenly in the mind, a third which dwells in the rivers. Night and Dawn are delivered of him, the Knowledge and the Ignorance suckle alternately the divine Child in their successive occupation of our heavens. And yet again it is Matarishwan, Master of Life, who has planted him for the gods secret in the growths of earth, secret in her creatures, man, animal and plant, secret in the mighty Waters. These Waters are the seven rivers of the luminous world that descend from heaven when Indra, the God-Mind, has slain the enveloping Python; they descend full of the light and the heavenly abundance, instinct with the clarity and the sweetness, the sweet milk and the butter and the honey. Agni's birth here from these fostering Cows, these Mothers of Plenty, is the greatest of his terrestrial births; fostered by them as the swift Mares of Life he grows at once to his divine greatness, fills all the planes with his vast and shining limbs and forms their kingdoms in the soul of man into the image of a divine Truth.

The variety and flexible use of these images — they are sometimes employed in a rapid succession in the same hymn — belongs to a period of conscious symbolism in which the image has not hardened and crystallised into the myth but is constantly a figure and a parable whose sense still lives and is still plastic in the originating imagination.

The actual legends about Agni, the developed parables as distinct from the less elaborate figure, are rare or non-existent — in remarkable contrast with the wealth of myth which crowds about the names of Indra and the Ashwins. He participates in the legendary actions of Indra, the Python-slaying, the recovery of the herds, the slaying of the Dasyus; his own activity is universal but in spite of his supreme greatness or perhaps because of it he seeks no separate end and claims no primacy over the other gods. He is content to be a worker for man and the helpful deities. He is the doer of the great Aryan work and the pure and sublime mediator between earth and heaven. Disinterested, sleepless, invincible this divine Will-force works in the world as a universal Soul of power housed in all beings, Agni Vaishwanara, the greatest, most powerful, most brilliant and most impersonal of all the cosmic Deities.

The name, Agni, is translated here Power, Strength, Will, the God-will, or the Flame according to the context. The names of the Rishis are also given, wherever necessary, their significant value, as in the first hymn Gavisthira which means the Steadfast in the Light or the general name Atri. Atri means either the Eater or the Traveller; Agni himself is the Atri as he is also the Angiras; out of a devouring desire, experience and enjoyment of the forms of the world he advances to the liberated truth and delight of the soul in the possession of its infinite existence.

The First Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE MORNING SACRIFICE

[The Rishi hymns the awakening of Agni the Divine Force to conscious action in the coming of the Dawn. Agni rises towards the luminous Paradise, his goal, feeding on the works of the Discernment which distributes the gifts and activities of the sacrifice, becomes a pure energy leading our days and ascends to the Vastness and the Truth. By the Truth he fashions anew our two firmaments, the physical and mental consciousness. This is the golden Affirmation of him in our heavens.]

अबोध्यग्निः समिधा जनानां प्रति धेनुमिवायतीमुषासम् ।
यह्‌वा इव प्र वयामुज्जिहानाः प्र भानवः सिस्रते नाकमच्छ ॥१॥

1. Strength is awake by kindling of the peoples and he fronts the Dawn that comes to him as the Cow that fosters; like mightinesses that rush upward to their expanding his lustres advancing mount towards the heavenly level.

अबोधि होता यजथाय देवानूर्ध्वो अग्निः सुमनाः प्रातरस्थात् ।
समिद्‌धस्य रुशददर्शि पाजो महान् देवस्तमसो निरमोचि ॥२॥

2. The Priest of our oblation has awakened for sacrifice to the gods; with right mentality in him Strength stands up exalted in our mornings; he is entirely kindled, red-flushing the mass of him is seen; a great godhead has been delivered out of the darkness.

यदीं गणस्य रशनामजीगः शुचिरङ्क्ते शुचिभिर्गोभिरग्निः ।
आद् दक्षिणा युज्यते वाजयन्त्युत्तानामूर्ध्वो अधयज्जुहूभिः ॥३॥

3. When he has uncoiled the long cord of his hosts, Strength shines pure by the pure herd of the radiances.[1] For the goddess who discerns grows in plenitude and is yoked to her works; he exalted, she extended supine, he feeds on her with his flames of the offering.

अग्निमच्छा देवयतां मनांसि चक्षूंषीव सूर्ये सं चरन्ति ।
यदीं सुवाते उषसा विरूपे श्वेतो वाजी जायते अग्रे अह्नाम् ॥ ४॥

4. The minds of men who grow in the godhead move entirely towards the flame of Will even as all their seeings converge in the Sun that illumines.[2] When two Dawns[3] of opposite forms are delivered of him, he is born as the White Steed in front of the days.

जनिष्ट हि जेन्यो अग्रे अह्नां हितो हितेष्वरुषो वनेषु ।
दमेदमे सप्त रत्ना दधानोऽग्निर्होता नि षसादा यजीयान् ॥ ५॥

5. Yea, he is born victorious in the front of the days, a ruddy worker established in the established delights of things; upholding in house after house the seven ecstasies[4] Strength has taken his seat as the Priest of the offering mighty for sacrifice.

अग्निर्होता न्यसीदद् यजीयानुपस्थे मातुः सुरभा उ लोके ।
युवा कविः पुरुनिःष्ठ ऋतावा धर्ता कृष्टीनामुत मध्य इद्धः ॥ ६॥

[1] The Cows of the Dawn. Dakshina, the goddess of divine discernment, is here a form of the Dawn herself.

[2] That is to say, instead of the groping thoughts of other men, their mentality tends to convert itself into a luminous flame of Will that is knowledge and all their thoughts become a blaze of direct vision, the rays of the Sun of Truth.

[3] Day and Night, — the latter the state of Ignorance that belongs to our material Nature, the former the state of illumined Knowledge that belongs to the divine Mind of which our mentality is a pale and dulled reflection.

[4] To each principle of our nature there corresponds a certain divine ecstasy and on each plane, in each body or house, Agni establishes these ecstasies.

6. Strength has taken his seat as the Priest of the offering mighty for sacrifice in the lap of the Mother and in that rapturous other world,[5] young and a seer, standing out in his multitudes, possessed of the Truth, the upholder of those that do the work; and also in between he is kindled.

प्र णु त्यं विप्रमध्वरेषु साधुमग्निं होतारमीळते नमोभिः ।
आ यस्ततान रोदसी ऋतेन नित्यं मृजन्ति वाजिनं घृतेन ॥ ७॥

7. Men seek with their obeisances of submission this illumined Strength that achieves our perfection in the progressing sacrifices and is the priest of their oblation, because he shapes in the power of the Truth both firmaments of our being. Him they press into brightness by the clarity,[6] the eternal steed of life's plenitude.

मार्जाल्यो मृज्यते स्वे दमूनाः कविप्रशस्तो अतिथिः शिवो नः ।
सहस्रशृङ्गो वृषभस्तदोजा विश्वाँ अग्ने सहसा प्रास्यन्यान् ॥ ८॥

8. Bright, he is rubbed bright, expressed by the seer, domiciled in his own home[7] and our beneficent guest. The bull of the thousand horns, because thou hast that force,[8] O Strength, thou precedest in thy puissance all others.

प्र सद्यो अग्ने अत्येष्यन्यानाविर्यस्मै चारुतमो बभूथ ।
ईळेन्यो वपुष्यो विभावा प्रियो विशामतिथिर्मानुषीणाम् ॥ ९॥

9. At once, O Strength, thou outstrippest all others, in whomsoever thou art manifested in all the glory of thy beauty,

[5] The mother is Earth, our physical being; the other world is the supramental existence; the vital and emotional being is the world in between. Agni manifests in all of these simultaneously.

[6] The clarified butter, yield of the Cow of Light and symbol of the rich clarity that comes to the mind visited by the Light.

[7] That is to say, having taken his place on the plane of the Truth which is his own proper home.

[8] The force of the Truth, the perfect energy that belongs to this perfect knowledge.

desirable, full of body, extended in light, the beloved guest of the human peoples.

तुभ्यं भरन्ति क्षितयो यविष्ठ बलिमग्ने अन्तित ओत दूरात् ।
आ भन्दिष्ठस्य सुमतिं चिकिद्धि बृहत् ते अग्ने महि शर्म भद्रम् ॥१०॥

10. To thee, O Strength, O youngest vigour, all the worlds and their peoples bring from near and bring from afar their offering. Awake in a man's knowledge to that right-mindedness of his happiest state. A vastness, O Strength, is the great and blissful peace of thee.

आद्य रथं भानुमो भानुमन्तमग्ने तिष्ठ यजतेभिः समन्तम् ।
विद्वान् पथीनामुर्वन्तरिक्षमेह देवान् हविरद्याय वक्षि ॥११॥

11. Mount today with the lords of the sacrifice, O luminous Will, thy luminous complete car! Thou who knowest the wide middle world[9] in all its paths, bring hither the gods to eat of our oblation.

अवोचाम कवये मेध्याय वचो वन्दारु वृषभाय वृष्णे ।
गविष्ठिरो नमसा स्तोममग्नौ दिवीव रुक्ममुरुव्यञ्चमश्रेत् ॥१२॥

12. To the Seer, to the Intelligence we have uttered today the word of our adoration, to the Bull that fertilises the herds; the Steadfast in the Light by his surrender rises in the flame of Will as in the heavens to a golden Affirmation manifesting a vastness.

[9] The vital or nervous plane is just above our material earth; through it the gods come to commune with man, but it is a confused wideness and its paths are many but intricate and tangled.

The Second Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE LIBERATION OF THE DIVINE FORCE

[Nature in her ordinary limited and material workings holds the Divine Force concealed in her secret or subconscient being; only when consciousness enlarges itself towards the One and Infinite, is it manifested, born for the conscient Mind. The clarities of the higher illumination cannot be kept so long as there is not this Strength to guard them, for hostile powers snatch them away and conceal them again in their secret cavern. Divine Will manifested in man, itself liberated, liberates him from the cords which bind him as a victim in the world-sacrifice; we attain to it by the teaching of Indra, the divine Mind, and it protects the uninterrupted play of the Light and destroys the powers of falsehood whose limitations cannot hem in its growth and its out-flaming; it brings the divine waters from the luminous Heaven, the divine wealth liberated from the attacks of the Enemy, and gives the final peace and perfection.]

कुमारं माता युवतिः समुब्धं गुहा बिभर्ति न ददाति पित्रे ।
अनीकमस्य न मिनज्जनासः पुरः पश्यन्ति निहितमरतौ ॥ १॥

1. The young Mother[1] bears the Boy pressed down in her secret being and gives him not to the Father; but his force is not diminished, the peoples behold him established in front[2] in the upward working of things.

कमेतं त्वं युवते कुमारं पेषी बिभर्षि महिषी जजान ।
पूर्वीर्हि गर्भः शरदो ववर्धाऽपश्यं जातं यदसूत माता ॥ २॥

[1] The Mother and Father are always either Nature and the Soul or the material being and the pure mental being.
[2] As the Purohit who leads and conducts the work of the sacrifice.

2. Who is this Boy whom thou bearest in thyself when thou art compressed into form, but thy vastness gives him birth? For many seasons the Child grew in the womb; I saw him born when the Mother brought him forth.

हिरण्यदन्तं शुचिवर्णमारात् क्षेत्रादपश्यमायुधा मिमानम् ।
ददानो अस्मा अमृतं विपृक्वत् किं मामनिन्द्राः कृणवन्ननुक्थाः ॥ ३॥

3. I saw far off in the field of being one tusked with golden light and pure bright of hue who was shaping the weapons of his war. I give to him the immortality in me in all my separate parts[3] and what shall they do to me who have not the Word[4] and the God-Mind is not in them?

क्षेत्रादपश्यं सनुतश्चरन्तं सुमद् यूथं न पुरु शोभमानम् ।
न ता अगृभ्रन्नजनिष्ट हि षः पलिक्नीरिद् युवतयो भवन्ति ॥ ४॥

4. I saw in the field as though a happy herd that ranged continuously in many forms of luminous beauty. None could seize on them, for he was born; even they that were old among them, grow young once more.

के मे मर्यकं वि यवन्त गोभिर्न येषां गोपा अरणश्चिदास ।
य ईं जगृभुरव ते सृजन्त्वाजाति पश्व उप नश्चिकित्वान् ॥ ५॥

5. Who were they that divorced my strength from the herds of Light? Against them there was no protector nor any worker in this war. Let those that took them from me, release them to me again; for he with his conscious perceptions comes driving to us our lost herds of the radiance.

वसां राजानं वसतिं जनानामरातयो नि दधुर्मर्त्येषु ।
ब्रह्माण्यत्रेरव तं सृजन्तु निन्दितारो निन्द्यासो भवन्तु ॥ ६॥

3 Soma, the wine of immortality, is given to the gods in three parts, on three levels of our being, the mind, life and body.

4 The expressive Word which manifests that which is hidden, brings out into expression that which is unexpressed.

6. The king of those who dwell in creatures, he in whom all creatures dwell, is hidden within mortals by hostile powers; let the soul-thoughts of the Eater of things release him, let the confiners be themselves confined.

शुनश्चिच्छेपं निदितं सहस्राद् यूपादमुञ्चो अशमिष्ट हि षः ।
एवास्मदग्ने वि मुमुग्धि पाशान् होतश्चिकित्व इह तू निषद्य ॥ ७॥

7. Shunahshepa too, head of delight, was bound to the thousandfold post of the sacrifice; him thou didst release, — yea, he accomplished perfection by his works; so do thou take thy seat here in us, O conscious seeing Flame, O Priest of our sacrifice, and loose from us the cords of our bondage.

हृणीयमानो अप हि मदैयेः प्र मे देवानां व्रतपा उवाच ।
इन्द्रो विद्वाँ अनु हि त्वा चचक्ष तेनाहमग्ने अनुशिष्ट आगाम् ॥ ८॥

8. Mayst thou not grow wroth and depart from me! He who guards the law of action of the godheads, told me of thee and, taught by him his knowledge, I came to thee.

वि ज्योतिषा बृहता भात्यग्निराविर्विश्वानि कृणुते महित्वा ।
प्रादेवीर्मायाः सहते दुरेवाः शिशीते शृङ्गे रक्षसे विनिक्षे ॥ ९॥

9. This Flame of Will shines out with the vast light of Truth and makes all things manifest by the greatness of him. He overpowers the formations of knowledge[5] that are undivine and of an evil movement; he sharpens his horns to gore the Rakshasa.

उत स्वानासो दिवि षन्त्वग्नेस्तिग्मायुधा रक्षसे हन्तवा उ ।
मदे चिदस्य प्र रुजन्ति भामा न वरन्ते परिबाधो अदेवीः ॥ १०॥

[5] Maya. There are two kinds of Maya, the divine and undivine, the formations of the truth and the formations of the falsehood.

10. May the voices of the Flame in our heavens be sharp-weaponed to slay the Rakshasa! In his ecstasy his angry lustres break all that opposes his advance; the energies undivine that obstruct us from every side cannot pen him in.

एतं ते स्तोमं तुविजात विप्रो रथं न धीरः स्वपा अतक्षम् ।
यदीदग्ने प्रति त्वं देव हर्याः स्वर्वतीरप एना जयेम ॥ ११॥

11. O thou who art born in many forms, I illumined in mind, accomplished in understanding, perfect in works, have fashioned for thee this song of thy affirming to be as if thy chariot. If thou, O Strength, take an answering delight in it, by this we may conquer the waters that carry the light of the luminous heaven.[6]

तुविग्रीवो वृषभो वावृधानोऽशत्र्वर्यः समजाति वेदः ।
इतीममग्निममृता अवोचन् बर्हिष्मते मनवे शर्म यंसद्-
धविष्मते मनवे शर्म यंसत् ॥ १२॥

12. The strong-necked[7] Bull increases in us and drives to us the treasure of knowledge[8] that was withheld by our enemy; nor is there any to destroy it. For so have the Powers Immortal spoken to the Strength that he work out peace for the man who enlarges the seat of sacrifice, that he work out peace for the man who carries in his hand the oblation.

[6] Swar, the divine mind pure to the luminous Truth.
[7] Or, many-necked.
[8] The wealth of the luminous herds.

The Third Hymn to Agni

THE DIVINE FORCE,
CONQUEROR OF THE SUPREME GOOD

[The Divine Will-Force is that of which all the other godheads are forms and he manifests all these powers of supreme Truth as he grows in us. Thus the supreme state of conscious being is attained and by that our complex and manifold existence is maintained in the Light and the Joy. The Rishi prays that the evil may not be allowed to express itself again in him, that the secret soul in us who is the Father of things but in us appears as the child of our works and our evolution, may open itself to the vast Truth-consciousness. The Divine Flame will destroy all the powers of falsehood and evil who seek to make us stumble and would rob us of our heavenly treasure.]

त्वमग्ने वरुणो जायसे यत् त्वं मित्रो भवसि यत् समिद्धः ।
त्वे विश्वे सहसस्पुत्र देवास्त्वमिन्द्रो दाशुषे मर्त्याय ॥ १॥

1. Thou art he of the Wideness,[1] O Will, when thou art born; thou becomest the Lord of Love[2] when thou art entirely kindled. In thee are all the gods, O son of Force; thou art the Power-in-Mind[3] for the mortal who gives the offering.

त्वमर्यमा भवसि यत् कनीनां नाम स्वधावन् गुह्यं बिभर्षि ।
अञ्जन्ति मित्रं सुधितं न गोभिर्यद् दंपती समनसा कृणोषि ॥ २॥

[1] Varuna, who represents the ethereal purity and oceanic wideness of the infinite Truth.

[2] Mitra, the all-embracing harmony of the Truth, the Friend of all beings, therefore the Lord of Love.

[3] Indra, Ruler of our being, Master of Swar which is the luminous world of the Divine Mind.

2. O thou who possessest self-ordering Nature, thou becomest the might of the Aspirer[4] when thou bearest the secret Name of the Virgins.[5] They brighten thee with the Light in her rays as Love[6] perfectly founded when thou makest of one mind the Lord and his Spouse[7] in their mansion.

तव श्रिये मरुतो मर्जयन्त रुद्र यत् ते जनिम चारु चित्रम् ।
पदं यद् विष्णोरुपमं निधायि तेन पासि गुह्यं नाम गोनाम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. For the glory of thee, O Violent One, the Thought-Powers make to shine out by their pressure that which is thy rich and beautiful birth.[8] When that highest stride[9] of Vishnu has been established within, thou protectest by it the secret Name of the herds of the Radiance.[10]

तव श्रिया सुदृशो देव देवाः पुरू दधाना अमृतं सपन्त ।
होतारमग्निं मनुषो नि षेदुर्दशस्यन्त उशिजः शंसमायोः ॥ ४ ॥

4. By the glory of thee because thou hast right vision, O godhead, the gods holding all that multiple existence taste immortality and men take their seat in the Force that offers the oblation and, desiring, they distribute to the godheads the self-expression of the being.

न त्वद्धोता पूर्वो अग्ने यजीयान् न काव्यैः परो अस्ति स्वधावः ।
विशश्च यस्या अतिथिर्भवासि स यज्ञेन वनवद् देव मर्तान् ॥ ५ ॥

4 Aryaman, the aspiring power and action of the Truth.

5 Probably, the unripe Radiances that our aspiration has to prepare for their union with the higher power of the soul; Aryaman holds their secret sense, the Name or Numen, which is manifested when aspiration arrives at the light of knowledge and Mitra harmonises soul and nature.

6 Mitra.

7 The Soul and Nature. The mansion is the human body.

8 The supreme world of Light. Agni is said elsewhere to become in his being the highest of the shining worlds.

9 Vishnu has three strides or movements, earth, heaven and the supreme world of which Light, Truth and the Sun are the foundation.

10 The highest divine sense of the illuminations of Knowledge is found in the superconscient worlds of supreme Light.

5. There is none that precedeth thee as the priest of the oblation nor any mightier for sacrifice; O Flame, none is supreme over thee in the things of the Wisdom, thou who possessest the self-ordering power of Nature. The creature of whom thou becomest the guest, O godhead, prevails by sacrifice over all that belong to the mortality.

वयमग्ने वनुयाम त्वोता वसूयवो हविषा बुध्यमानाः ।
वयं समर्ये विदथेष्वह्नां वयं राया सहसस्पुत्र मर्तान् ॥ ६ ॥

6. May we, O Flame, fostered by thee and awakened, seekers of the substance, prevail by the offering, — we in the great struggle, we in the comings of knowledge in our days,[11] we by the felicity, O son of Force, overcome all that are mortal.

यो न आगो अभ्येनो भरात्यधीदघमघशंसे दधात ।
जही चिकित्वो अभिशस्तिमेतामग्ने यो नो मर्चयति द्वयेन ॥ ७ ॥

7. The expresser of evil who seeks to bring sin and transgression into us, his own evil do thou return upon his head; slay, O conscious knower, this hostile self-expression of him who oppresses us with the duality.

त्वामस्या व्युषि देव पूर्वे दूतं कृण्वाना अयजन्त हव्यैः ।
संस्थे यदग्न ईयसे रयीणां देवो मर्तैर्वसुभिरिध्यमानः ॥ ८ ॥

8. Thee, O Godhead, in the dawning of this our Night the Ancients[12] made their messenger and through thee sacrificed by their offerings because thou art the godhead that is being kindled by the mortal dwellers in this substance and thou movest to the meeting-place[13] of all felicities.

11 The periods of Light visiting the soul.
12 The ancient seers who discovered the secret wisdom.
13 The supreme world of Truth and Bliss.

अव स्पृधि पितरं योधि विद्वान् पुत्रो यस्ते सहसः सून ऊहे ।
कदाँ चिकित्वो अभि चक्षसे नोऽग्ने कदा ऋतचिद् यातयासे ॥ ९ ॥

9. Deliver the Father and in thy knowledge put away evil from him who is borne in us as thy son, O child of Force. When wilt thou have that vision for us, O conscious Knower? when wilt thou, O Truth-conscious Will, impel us to the journey?

भूरि नाम वन्दमानो दधाति पिता वसो यदि तज्जोषयासे ।
कुविद् देवस्य सहसा चकानः सुम्नमग्निर्वनते वावृधानः ॥ १० ॥

10. Then indeed the Father adores and holds, O Dweller in the substance, the vast Name[14] when thou makest him to accept and cleave to it. Will in us desires the bliss and, increasing, wins it entirely by the force of the Godhead.[15]

त्वमङ्ग जरितारं यविष्ठ विश्वान्यग्ने दुरिताति पर्षि ।
स्तेना अदृश्रन् रिपवो जनासोऽज्ञातकेता वृजिना अभूवन् ॥ ११ ॥

11. Thou, O Will, O youngest vigour, carriest thy adorer beyond all stumblings into grief and evil; for the creatures are seen of thee who would do hurt to us and are thieves in their hearts, — they whose perceptions are void of the knowledge and therefore they have fallen into the crookedness.

इमे यामासस्त्वद्रिगभूवन् वसवे वा तदिदागो अवाचि ।
नाहायमग्निरभिशस्तये नो न रीषते वावृधानः परा दात् ॥ १२ ॥

12. Lo, all these movements of our journeying have turned their faces towards thee, and for that evil in us, it is declared to the Dweller in our being. O never can this Will in his increasing betray us to the hurter of our self-expression; he will not deliver us into the hands of our enemy!

14 The world of Truth is also called the Wideness or the Vast or the Vast Truth.
15 The Deva, the supreme Deity, of whom all the gods are different Names and Powers.

The Fourth Hymn to Agni

THE DIVINE WILL, PRIEST, WARRIOR AND LEADER OF OUR JOURNEY

[The Rishi hymns the Divine Force that knows all the successive births of the soul on its ascending planes of existence and as priest of his upward and onward-journeying sacrifice gives him the purity, the power, the knowledge, the increasing riches, the faculty of new formation and spiritual productiveness by which the mortal grows into immortality. It destroys the enemy, the assailants, the powers of evil, enriches the soul with all they try to withhold, gives the triple peace and the triple fulfilment of the mental, vital and physical being and, labouring in the light of the supramental Truth, leads beyond, creating in us the world of immortal felicity.]

त्वामग्ने वसुपतिं वसूनामभि प्र मन्दे अध्वरेषु राजन् ।
त्वया वजं वाजयन्तो जयेमाऽभि ष्याम पृत्सुतीर्मर्त्यानाम् ॥१॥

1. Strength, master over the lords of substance, towards thee I direct my delight in the march of my sacrifices. O King, by thee, increasing thy plenitudes, may we conquer our plenty and overcome the embattled assaults of mortal powers.

हव्यवाळग्निरजरः पिता नो विभुर्विभावा सुदृशीको अस्मे ।
सुगार्हपत्याः समिषो दिदीह्यस्मद्र्यक् सं मिमीहि श्रवांसि ॥२॥

2. Strength unaging that bears the oblation is the Father of us, he in us pervades in being and is extended in light and is perfect in vision. Kindle altogether thy strengths of impulsion

that belong perfectly to the Master in our dwelling,[1] form altogether thy inspirations of knowledge and turn them towards us.

विशां कविं विश्पतिं मानुषीणाम् शुचिं पावकं घृतपृष्ठमग्निम् ।
नि होतारं विश्वविदं दधिध्वे स देवेषु वनते वार्याणि ॥ ३॥

3. Will that is the Seer and Lord of the creature in the human peoples, that is pure and purifies, with his surface of the mind's clarities, Will omniscient hold in you as the priest of your oblations, for this is he that wins for you your desirable boons in the godheads.

जुषस्वाग्न इळया सजोषा यतमानो रश्मिभिः सूर्यस्य ।
जुषस्व नः समिधं जातवेद आ च देवान् हविरद्याय वक्षि ॥ ४॥

4. Becoming of one heart with the goddess of Truth-vision,[2] labouring by the rays of the Sun of Light, cleave to us with love, O Strength: accept in heart thy fuel in us, O Knower of the Births, and bring to us the gods that they may eat of our offering.

जुष्टो दमूना अतिथिर्दुरोण इमं नो यज्ञमुप याहि विद्वान् ।
विश्वा अग्ने अभियुजो विहत्या शत्रूयतामा भरा भोजनानि ॥ ५॥

5. Domiciled in our gated dwelling, the Guest loved and accepted, come to this our sacrifice in all thy knowledge; all these energies slay that set themselves to attack us and bring to us their enjoyments who make themselves our enemies.[3]

वधेन दस्युं प्र हि चातयस्व वयः कृण्वानस्तन्वे स्वायै ।
पिपर्षि यत् सहसस्पुत्र देवान्त्सो अग्ने पाहि नृतम वाजे अस्मान् ॥ ६॥

[1] Agni is here the supreme Will dwelling in us, Father and Lord of our being; he is to act in us entirely by the divine will and knowledge.

[2] Ila.

[3] All hostile energies that attack the soul of man possess certain riches which he needs and has to wrest from them in order to arrive at his perfect plenitude.

6. Chase from us with thy blow the Divider, make a free space for thine own body! When, O Son of Force, thou art carrying the gods over to their goal,[4] protect us in the plenitude of our possession, O Strength, O mightiest Deity.

वयं ते अग्न उक्थैर्विधेम वयं हव्यैः पावक भद्रशोचे ।
अस्मे रयिं विश्ववारं समिन्वास्मे विश्वानि द्रविणानि धेहि ॥ ७॥

7. May we order aright for thee our sacrifice by our words and by our offerings, O Will that purifiest, O happy flame of purity; in us pervade a felicity of all desirable boons, in us confirm all substance of our riches.

अस्माकमग्ने अध्वरं जुषस्व सहसः सूनो त्रिषधस्थ हव्यम् ।
वयं देवेषु सुकृतः स्याम शर्मणा नस्त्रिवरूथेन पाहि ॥ ८॥

8. O Will, O Son of Force who dwellest in the three worlds[5] of our session, cleave in heart to our sacrifice, cleave to our oblation. May we become perfect in our works in the godheads; protect us by thy peace triple-armoured.[6]

विश्वानि नो दुर्गहा जातवेदः सिन्धुं न नावा दुरितातिपर्षि ।
अग्ने अत्रिवन्नमसा गृणानोऽस्माकं बोध्यविता तनूनाम् ॥ ९॥

9. O Knower of the Births, bear us over every difficult crossing, yea, over all stumblings into evil as in a ship that travels over the waters. O Will, expressed by us with our obeisance of submission as the Eater of things, awake in us, be the fosterer of our embodyings.[7]

[4] The divine powers in us are carried to their goal in the Truth and Bliss by the force of the Divine Will working in man.

[5] Mental, vital, physical, the lower "births" all the knowledge of which the Divine Will, knower of our Births, possesses and through which it has to lead the ascending sacrifice to the supramental.

[6] The peace, joy and full satisfaction in the mental, vital and physical being.

[7] Not only the physical body, but the vital and mental sheaths, all the embodied states or forms of the soul.

यस्त्वा हृदा कीरिणा मन्यमानोऽमर्त्यं मर्त्यो जोहवीमि ।
जातवेदो यशो अस्मासु धेहि प्रजाभिरग्ने अमृतत्वमश्याम् ॥१०॥

10. I meditate on thee with a heart that does the Work and, mortal, I call to the Immortal. O Will, O Knower of the Births, confirm victory in us; by the children of my works may I enjoy immortality.

यस्मै त्वं सुकृते जातवेद उ लोकमग्ने कृणवः स्योनम् ।
अश्विनं स पुत्रिणं वीरवन्तं गोमन्तं रयिं नशते स्वस्ति ॥११॥

11. O Knower of the Births, the man perfect in his works for whom thou createst that other blissful world,[8] reaches a felicity that is peopled happily with his life's swiftnesses, his herds of Light, the children of his soul, the armies of his energy.[9]

[8] The supramental world has to be formed or created in us by the Divine Will as the result of a constant expansion and self-perfecting.

[9] The constant Vedic symbols of the Horse, Cow, Son, Hero. The sons or children are the new soul-formations which constitute the divine Personality, the new births within us. The heroes are the mental and moral energies which resist the assaults of ignorance, division, evil and falsehood. The vital powers are the motive forces that bear us on our journey and are therefore symbolised by the Horse. The herds are the illuminations that come to us from the supramental Truth, herding rays of the sun of Light.

The Fifth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE SUMMONING OF THE GODS

[The hymn calls to the sacrifice by the summons of the divine Flame the principal godheads. Each is described or invoked in that capacity and functioning in which he is needed and helpful to the perfection of the soul and its divine growth and attaining.]

सुसमिद्धाय शोचिषे घृतं तीव्रं जुहोतन ।
अग्नये जातवेदसे ॥ १॥

1. To the Will that knoweth all the births, to the Flame highly kindled, purely luminous offer a poignant clarity.

नराशंसः सुषूदतीमं यज्ञमदाभ्यः ।
कविर्हि मधुहस्त्यः ॥ २॥

2. This is he that expresses the powers of the gods, the untameable who speeds on its way this our sacrifice, this is the seer who comes with the wine of sweetness in his hands.

ईळितो अग्न आ वहेन्द्रं चित्रमिह प्रियम् ।
सुखै रथेभिरूतये ॥ ३॥

3. O Strength, we have sought thee with our adoration, bring hither the God-Mind[1] bright and dear in his happy chariots[2] for our increasing.

[1] Indra.
[2] The plural is used to indicate the manifold movement of the Divine Mind in its completeness.

ऊर्णम्रदा वि प्रथस्वाऽभ्यर्का अनूषत ।
भवा नः शुभ्र सातये ॥ ४ ॥

4. Widely spread thyself,[3] softly, thickly covering; towards thee lighten the voices of our illumination. Be white and bright in us that we may conquer.

देवीर्द्वारो वि श्रयध्वं सुप्रायणा न ऊतये ।
प्रप्र यज्ञं पृणीतन ॥ ५ ॥

5. Swing open, O ye Doors divine,[4] and give us easy passage for our expanding; farther, farther lead and fill full our sacrifice.

सुप्रतीके वयोवृधा यह्वी ऋतस्य मातरा ।
दोषामुषासमीमहे ॥ ६ ॥

6. Darkness and Dawn[5] we desire, two mighty Mothers of the Truth, fairly fronting us, increasers of our spacious being.

वातस्य पत्मन्नीळिता दैव्या होतारा मनुषः ।
इमं नो यज्ञमा गतम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. And O ye divine Priests of our humanity, O worshipped Twain, approach on the paths of the Life-breath to this our sacrifice.

[3] This verse is addressed to Indra, the Power of divine Mind, through whom comes the illumination of the supramental Truth; by the advancing chariots of this giver of Light we conquer our divine possessions.

[4] Man's sacrifice is his labour and aspiration Godwards and is represented as travelling through the opening doors of the concealed heavenly realms, kingdoms conquered in succession by the expanding soul.

[5] Night and Day, symbols of the alternation of the divine and human consciousness in us. The Night of our ordinary consciousness holds and prepares all that the Dawn brings out into conscious being.

इळा सरस्वती मही तिस्रो देवीर्मयोभुवः ।
बर्हिः सीदन्त्वस्रिधः ॥ ८॥

8. She of the vision of knowledge, she of its flowing inspiration, she of its vastness, three goddesses[6] who give birth to the Bliss, they who stumble not,[7] may they take their seats at the altar strewn of the sacrifice.

शिवस्त्वष्टरिहा गहि विभुः पोष उत त्मना ।
यज्ञेयज्ञे न उदव ॥ ९॥

9. O Fashioner of things,[8] beneficent hither come to us; pervader of all in thy being, in thy nourishing of all and with thyself,[9] in sacrifice after sacrifice foster our ascension.

यत्र वेथ वनस्पते देवानां गुह्या नामानि ।
तत्र हव्यानि गामय ॥ १०॥

10. O Master of Delight,[10] to that goal[11] where thou knowest the secret Names of the gods, thither lead our offerings.

स्वाहाग्नये वरुणाय स्वाहेन्द्राय मरुद्भ्यः ।
स्वाहा देवेभ्यो हविः ॥ ११॥

[6] Ila, Saraswati, Mahi; their names are translated in order to give the idea of their functions.
[7] Or, who are not assailed, cannot be attacked by the ignorance and darkness, cause of our suffering.
[8] Twashtri.
[9] The Divine as the Fashioner of things pervades all that He fashions both with His immutable self-existence and with that mutable becoming of Himself in things by which the soul seems to grow and increase and take on new forms. By the former He is the indwelling Lord and Maker, by the latter He is the material of his own works.
[10] Soma.
[11] The Ananda, the state of divine Beatitude in which all the powers of our being are revealed in their perfect godhead, here secret and hidden from us.

11. Swaha to the Will and to the Lord of Wideness,[12] Swaha to the God-Mind and to the Thought-Powers,[13] Swaha to the godheads be the food of our oblation.[14]

[12] Varuna.
[13] The Maruts, nervous or vital forces of our being which attain to conscious expression in the thought, singers of the hymn to Indra, the God-Mind.
[14] That is, let all in us that we offer to the divine Life be turned into the self-light and self-force of the divine Nature.

The Sixth Hymn to Agni

THE GALLOPING FLAME-POWERS OF THE JOURNEY

[The flames of Agni the divine Will, home and meeting-place of all our increasing and advancing life-powers, are imaged as galloping on our human journey to the supreme good. Divine Will creates in us the divine strength of impulsion, an illumined and undecaying force and flame described as the steed of the plenitude, which brings us that good and carries us to that goal. His flames are coursers on the path who increase by the sacrifice; they hasten uninterruptedly, and race always more swiftly; they bring in the penned-up illuminations of the hidden knowledge. Their entire force and rapidity are accorded when the divine Strength is filled and satisfied with the sacrificial offerings.]

अग्निं तं मन्ये यो वसुरस्तं यं यन्ति धेनवः ।
अस्तमर्वन्त आशवोऽस्तं नित्यासो वाजिन इषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥१॥

1. On Strength I meditate who is the dweller in substance and to him as their home go our fostering herds, to him as their home our swift war-steeds,[1] to him as their home our powers of the plenitude.
   Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.[2]

सो अग्निर्यो वसुर्गृणे सं यमायन्ति धेनवः ।
समर्वन्तो रघुद्रुवः सं सुजातासः सूरय इषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥२॥

[1] The Horse is the symbol of Force in the Veda, especially of vital force. It is variously the Arvat or war-steed in the battle and the Vajin, the steed of the journey which brings us in the plenty of our spiritual wealth.

[2] The power that enables us to make the journey through the night of our being to the divine Light.

2. He is that Strength who is the dweller in substance; him I express in whom come together[3] our fostering herds, in whom meet our swiftly galloping war-steeds, in whom our luminous seers that come to perfect birth in us.
Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

अग्निर्हि वाजिनं विशे ददाति विश्वचर्षणिः ।
अग्नी राये स्वाभुवं स प्रीतो याति वार्यमिषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ ३॥

3. Will, the universal toiler, gives to the creature his steed of the plenitude, Will gives that which comes into entire being in us for the felicity and, satisfied, it journeys to the desirable good.
Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

आ ते अग्न इधीमहि द्युमन्तं देवाजरम् ।
यद्ध स्या ते पनीयसी समिद् दीदयति द्यवीषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ ४॥

4. That fire of thee we kindle O God, O Flame, luminous, unaging, when that more effective force of thy labour blazes in our heavens.
Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

आ ते अग्न ऋचा हविः शुक्रस्य शोचिषस्पते ।
सुश्चन्द्र दस्म विश्पते हव्यवाट् तुभ्यं हूयत इषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ ५॥

5. Will, master of the pure-bright flame, thine is the offering cast by the illumining word; bearer of the oblation, to thee it is cast, O master of the creature, achiever of works, perfect in delight.
Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

प्रो त्ये अग्नयोऽग्निषु विश्वं पुष्यन्ति वार्यम् ।
ते हिन्विरे त इन्विरे त इषण्यन्त्यानुषगिषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ ६॥

[3] All our growing powers of force and knowledge move towards the manifestation of the divine Knowledge-Force and in it combine and are harmonised.

6. Those are thy flames that in these thy other flames nourish and advance every desirable good; they, they race! they, they run! they drive on in their impulsions without a break.
Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

तव त्ये अग्ने अर्चयो महि व्राधन्त वाजिनः ।
ये पत्वभिः शफानां व्रजा भुरन्त गोनामिषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ ७॥

7. Those are thy fiery rays, O Will, steeds of the plenitude, and they increase into the largeness and with tramplings of their hooves they bring in the pens of the luminous kine.[4]
Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

नवा नो अग्न आ भर स्तोतृभ्यः सुक्षितीरिषः ।
ते स्याम य आनृचुस्त्वादूतासो दमेदम इषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ ८॥

8. Bring, O Will, to those who affirm thee new strengths of impulsion that find aright their dwelling-place;[5] may we be they who because they have thee for their messenger, sing the hymn of illumination in home and home.
Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

उभे सुश्चन्द्र सर्पिषो दर्वी श्रीणीष आसनि ।
उतो न उत् पुपूर्या उक्थेषु शवसस्पत इषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ ९॥

9. Both[6] ladles of the running richness thou approachest to thy mouth, O perfect in delight; mayst thou in our speakings utterly fill thyself, O master of shining strength.
Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

[4] The illuminations of the divine Truth penned up in the cavern of the subconscient by the lords of sense-action.

[5] That is, they take us to our home in the world of Truth, the superconscient plane, own home of Agni, in which all these impulsions advancing find their rest and dwelling-place. It is reached by an ascent from plane to plane opened in succession by the power of the divine illumining Word.

[6] Perhaps, the divine and the human delight.

एवाँ अग्निमजुर्यमुर्गीर्भिर्यज्ञेभिरानुषक् ।
दधदस्मे सुवीर्यमुत त्यदाश्वश्व्यमिषं स्तोतृभ्य आ भर ॥ १० ॥

10. So by our words and our sacrifices they without any break drive and control the Strength. May he establish in us an utter energy[7] and that swift galloping force.[8]
Bring to those who affirm thee thy force of the impulsion.

[7] The hero-power of the battling soul.
[8] *Āśu aśvyam*, the swift Horse-Power, with a play on the two words giving it the sense of "swift horse-swiftness".

The Seventh Hymn to Agni

THE DIVINE WILL, DESIRER, ENJOYER, PROGRESSIVE FROM THE ANIMAL TO BLISS AND KNOWLEDGE

[Agni is hymned as the divine Force that brings the bliss and the ray of the truth into the human being and light into the night of our darkness. He leads men in their labour to his own infinite levels; he enjoys and tears up the objects of earthly enjoyment, but all his multitude of desires are for the building of a universality, an all-embracing enjoyment in the divine home of the human being. He is the animal moving as the enjoyer by the progressive movement of Nature, as with an axe through the forest, to the achievement and the bliss. This passionate, emotional, animal being of man is given by him to be purified into the peace and bliss; in it he establishes a divine light and knowledge and the awakened state of the soul.]

सखायः सं वः सम्यञ्चमिषं स्तोमं चाग्नये ।
वर्षिष्ठाय क्षितीनामूर्जो नप्त्रे सहस्वते ॥ १॥

1. O comrades, in you an absolute force of impulsion and an utter affirming for the Strength that lavishes all his abundance on the worlds of our dwelling,[1] for the master of Force, for the son of Energy.

कुत्रा चिद् यस्य समृतौ रण्वा नरो नृषदने ।
अर्हन्तश्चिद् यमिन्धते संजनयन्ति जन्तवः ॥ २॥

[1] Or, on the dwellers in the world.

2. Wheresoever man's soul comes to the utter meeting with him, it becomes full of delight in its dwelling-place. Even they who are adepts in the strength continue to kindle the flame of him and all creatures born work to bring him to perfect birth.

सं यदिषो वनामहे सं हव्या मानुषाणाम् ।
उत द्युम्नस्य शवस ऋतस्य रश्मिमा ददे ॥ ३॥

3. When wholly we possess and enjoy our strengths of impulsion, wholly all that men offer as a sacrifice, then I receive the ray of the Truth in its illumination and shining energy.[2]

स स्मा कृणोति केतुमा नक्तं चिद् दूर आ सते ।
पावको यद् वनस्पतीन् प्र स्मा मिनात्यजरः ॥ ४॥

4. Verily he creates the light of perception even for one who sits far off in the night, when himself undecaying the purifier compresses the lords[3] of the woodland of delight.

अव स्म यस्य वेषणे स्वेदं पथिषु जुह्वति ।
अभीमह स्वजेन्यं भूमा पृष्ठेव रुरुहुः ॥ ५॥

5. When in his circling men cast the sweat[4] of their toil as an offering on the paths, then they ascend to him where he sits self-joyous[5] like climbers who arrive upon large levels.[6]

[2] Or, "of the light, the luminous force, the truth."
[3] *Vanaspatīn*, in its double sense, the trees, the lords of the forest, growths of the earth, our material existence, and lords of delight. Soma, producer of the immortalising wine, is the typical *vanaspati*.
[4] An equivoque on the double sense of the word, sweat and the rich droppings of the food-offering.
[5] Or, self-victorious.
[6] These are the wide free infinite planes of existence founded on the Truth, the open levels opposed elsewhere to the uneven crookednesses which shut in men limiting their vision and obstructing their journey.

यं मर्त्यः पुरुस्पृहं विदद् विश्वस्य धायसे ।
प्र स्वादनं पितूनामस्ततातिं चिदायवे ॥ ६॥

6. Him shall mortal man come to know as the godhead who has this multitude of his desires that he may establish in us the all; for he reaches forward to the sweet taste of all foods and he builds a home[7] for this human being.

स हि ष्मा धन्वाक्षितं दाता न दात्या पशुः ।
हिरिश्मश्रुः शुचिदन्नृभुरनिभृष्टतविषिः ॥ ७॥

7. Yea, he teareth to pieces this desert[8] in which we dwell as the Animal that teareth its food; the beard of this Beast is of the golden light, his fang is a purity and the force in him is not afflicted by his heats.

शुचिः ष्म यस्मा अत्रिवत् प्र स्वधितीव रीयते ।
सुषूरसूत माता क्राणा यदानशे भगम् ॥ ८॥

8. Pure indeed is he for whom as for the eater of things there is the flowing progression by Nature,[9] as by an axe, and with a happy travail she, his Mother, brought him forth that he may accomplish her works and taste of the enjoyment.[10]

[7] The home of man, the higher divine world of his existence which is being formed by the gods in his being through the sacrifice. This home is the complete Beatitude into which all human desires and enjoyings have to be transformed and lose themselves. Therefore Agni, the purifier, devours all the forms of material existence and enjoyment in order to reduce them to their divine equivalent.

[8] The material existence not watered by the streams or rivers which descend from the superconscient Bliss and Truth.

[9] Again an equivoque on the double sense of *svadhiti*, an axe or other cleaving instrument and the self-ordering power of Nature, Swadha. The image is of the progress of the divine Force through the forests of the material existence as with an axe. But the axe is the natural self-arranging progression of Nature, the World-Energy, the Mother from whom this divine Force, son of Energy, is born.

[10] The divine enjoyment, *bhaga*, typified by the god Bhaga, the Enjoyer in the power of the Truth.

आ यस्ते सर्पिरासुतेऽग्ने शमस्ति धायसे ।
ऐषु द्युम्नमुत श्रव आ चित्तं मर्त्येषु धाः ॥९॥

9. O strength, O presser out on us of the running richness, when thou findest one who is a glad peace[11] for the establishing of thy works, in such mortals illumination establish and inspired knowledge and the conscious soul.

इति चिन्मन्युमध्रिजस्त्वादातमा पशुं ददे ।
आदग्ने अपृणतोऽत्रिः सासह्याद् दस्यूनिषः सासह्यान्नॄन् ॥१०॥

10. For to this end I born in the material existence receive as thy gift the emotional mind and the animal being.[12] Yea, O Will, may the eater of things overpower the Dividers[13] who minister not to his fullness; these souls that rush upon him with their impulsions may he overcome.

[11] *Śam* and *śarma* in the Veda express the idea of peace and joy, the joy that comes of the accomplished labour, *śamī*, or work of the sacrifice: the toil of the battle and the journey find their rest, a foundation of beatitude is acquired which is already free from the pain of strife and effort.

[12] Literally, passion-mind and the animal; but the word *paśu* may also mean, as it does oftenest in the Veda, the symbolic Cow of light; in that case the sense will be the emotional mind and the illumined mind. But the first rendering agrees better with the general sense of the hymn and with its previous use of the word.

[13] The Dasyus who hack and cut up the growth and unity of the soul and seek to assail and destroy its divine strength, joy and knowledge. They are powers of Darkness, the sons of Danu or Diti the divided being.

The Eighth Hymn to Agni

DIVINE WILL, THE UNIVERSAL FULFILLER

[The Rishi having declared the continuity of the great effort and aspiration from the earliest times hymns divine Will harboured in us, inmate, priest of the sacrifice, master of this dwelling, who fulfils the universal impulse in all its multiplicity and both stimulates and leads it in act and knowledge.]

त्वामग्न ऋतायवः समीधिरे प्रत्नं प्रत्नास ऊतये सहस्कृत ।
पुरुश्चन्द्रं यजतं विश्वधायसं दमूनसं गृहपतिं वरेण्यम् ॥ १॥

1. Will who art by force created in us, thee the pristine Power the pristine seekers of the Truth kindled entirely that they might grow in their being, the god in the sacrifice, who because he has the multitude of his delights establishes the all,[1] domiciled in us, master of the dwelling, inmate supremely desirable.

त्वामग्ने अतिथिं पूर्व्यं विशः शोचिष्केशं गृहपतिं नि षेदिरे ।
बृहत्केतुं पुरुरूपं धनस्पृतं सुशर्माणं स्ववसं जरद्विषम् ॥ २॥

2. Will, in thee the supreme[2] guest and master of the house with his locks of light the peoples take their foundation because thou hast with thee vast vision and the multitude of thy forms and the extraction of our riches and the perfect peace and perfect being and the destruction of enemies.[3]

[1] Or, fosters all.
[2] "First", both original and supreme.
[3] The hostile powers who try to break up the unity and completeness of our being and from whom the riches which rightly belong to us have to be rescued, not human enemies.

त्वामग्ने मानुषीरीळते विशो होत्राविदं विविचिं रत्नधातमम् ।
गुहा सन्तं सुभग विश्वदर्शतं तुविष्वणसं सुयजं घृतश्रियम् ॥ ३॥

3. Will, thee the human peoples seek with their adoration who hast knowledge of the powers[4] of the sacrifice and rightly discriminating holdest for us utterly the delight and thou art seated in our secret being, O perfect enjoyer, seeing with a universal vision, pouring the multitude of thy voices, doing aright the sacrifice, agleam with the glory of the clarity.

त्वामग्ने धर्णसिं विश्वधा वयं गीर्भिर्गृणन्तो नमसोप सेदिम ।
स नो जुषस्व समिधानो अङ्गिरो देवो मर्तस्य यशसा सुदीतिभिः ॥ ४॥

4. Will who sustainest the law of things in their universality, thee we approach with obeisance of submission and express thee by the words; so do thou, O puissant seer, approve and cleave to us, a godhead set high-blazing by the victory[5] of the mortal, by his right illuminings.

त्वमग्ने पुरुरूपो विशेविशे वयो दधासि प्रत्नथा पुरुष्टुत ।
पुरूण्यन्ना सहसा वि राजसि त्विषिः सा ते तित्विषाणस्य नाधृषे ॥ ५॥

5. Will multiply affirmed, thou takest many forms according to the man and establishest for each his wide manifestation even as of old; thou illuminest in thy force the many things that are thy food and none can do violence to that blaze of thy light when so thou blazest up.

त्वामग्ने समिधानं यविष्ठ्य देवा दूतं चक्रिरे हव्यवाहनम् ।
उरुज्रयसं घृतयोनिमाहुतं त्वेषं चक्षुर्दधिरे चोदयन्मति ॥ ६॥

6. Will, youngest vigour, thee the gods have kindled high and made their envoy to man and the bearer of his offerings; wide in thy rapidities, born from the clarity, receiver of the

4 Or, the process of the oblation.
5 Attainment, or the splendour or glory.

oblation, thee they have set in him as a keen and burning eye that urges his mentality.

त्वामग्ने प्रदिव आहुतं घृतैः सुम्नायवः सुषमिधा समीधिरे ।
स वावृधान ओषधीभिरुक्षितोऽभि ज्रयांसि पार्थिवा वि तिष्ठसे ॥ ७॥

7. Will, thee men who seek the bliss kindle high with an entire kindling, fed by their clarities in the front of heaven;[6] so increasing, diffused by its growths that hold its heats, thou enterest widely into all the earth-life's speeding movements.

[6] Heaven and earth, the pure mental being and the material consciousness.

The Ninth Hymn to Agni

DIVINE WILL ASCENDENT
FROM THE ANIMAL TO MENTALITY

[The Rishi speaks of the birth of the divine Will by the working of the pure mental on the material consciousness, its involved action in man's ordinary state of mortal mind emotional, nervous, passionate marked by crooked activities and perishable enjoyments and its emergence on the third plane of our being where it is forged and sharpened into a clear and effective power for liberation and spiritual conquest. It knows all the births or planes of our existence and leads the sacrifice and its offerings by a successive and continuous progress to the divine goal and home.]

त्वामग्ने हविष्मन्तो देवं मर्तास ईळते ।
मन्ये त्वा जातवेदसं स हव्या वक्ष्यानुषक् ॥ १॥

1. Thee the godhead mortals with the oblation seek, O Will; on thee I meditate who knowest the births; therefore thou carriest to the goal our offerings without a break.

अग्निर्होता दास्वतः क्षयस्य वृक्तबर्हिषः ।
सं यज्ञासश्चरन्ति यं सं वाजासः श्रवस्यवः ॥ २॥

2. Will is the priest of the oblation for man who gives the offering and forms the seat of sacrifice and attains to his home; for in him our works of sacrifice converge and in him our plenitudes of the Truth's inspirations.

उत स्म यं शिशुं यथा नवं जनिष्टारणी ।
धर्तारं मानुषीणां विशामग्निं स्वध्वरम् ॥ ३॥

3. True too it is that thou art born from the two Workings[1] like a new-born infant, thou who art the upholder of the human peoples, Will that leads aright the sacrifice.

उत स्म दुर्गृभीयसे पुत्रो न ह्वार्याणाम् ।
पुरू यो दग्धासि वनाग्ने पशुर्न यवसे ॥ ४॥

4. True too it is that thou art hard to seize as a son of crookednesses[2] when thou devourest the many growths of delight like an Animal that feeds in his pasture.

अध स्म यस्यार्चयः सम्यक् संयन्ति धूमिनः ।
यदीमह त्रितो दिव्युप ध्मातेव धमति शिशीते ध्मातरी यथा ॥ ५॥

5. But afterwards thy fiery rays with their smoky passion meet together entirely; oh then, the third Soul[3] forges him in our heavens like a smith in his smithy; 'tis as if in the smith himself that he whets him into a weapon of sharpness.[4]

तवाहमग्न ऊतिभिर्मित्रस्य च प्रशस्तिभिः ।
द्वेषोयुतो न दुरिता तुर्याम मर्त्यानाम् ॥ ६॥

6. O Will, may I by thy expandings and thy expressings of the Lord of Love, — yea, may we, as men assailed by enemies, so besieged by discords, pass through and beyond these stumblings of mortals.

[1] The two Aranis or tinders by which the fire is struck out; the word can also mean workings and is related to *arya*. Heaven and Earth are the two Aranis which produce Agni; Heaven his father, Earth his mother.

[2] Literally, of the crooked ones, possibly the seven rivers or movements of our being winding through the obstructions of our mortal existence.

[3] Trita Aptya, the Third or Triple, apparently the Purusha of the mental plane. In the tradition he is a Rishi and has two companions significantly named Eka, one or single, and Dwita, second or double, who must be the Purushas of the material and the vital or dynamic consciousness. In the Veda he seems rather to be a god.

[4] The original is very compressed in style and suggestion beyond even the common Vedic pregnancy of structure and phrase, "When, oh, him Trita forges in heaven like a smith, sharpens as in the smith". In English we have to expand in order to bring out the meaning.

तं नो अग्ने अभी नरो रयिं सहस्व आ भर ।
स क्षेपयत् स पोषयद् भुवद् वाजस्य सातय उतैधि पृत्सु नो वृधे ॥७॥

7. Bring to us human souls that felicity, O Will, thou forceful one! May he shoot us forward on our path, may he nourish and increase us and be in us for the conquest of the plenitude. March with us in our battles that we may grow.

The Tenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE SPLENDID SOULS WHO ATTAIN

[The Rishi prays to the divine Flame to work in him by the triple force of Power, Knowledge and Delight. He speaks of the splendid souls of knowledge in our humanity who attain to the Truth and Vastness; they are the burning and overpowering flame-rays of this transcendent Conscious-Force of the Divine that is at work in us to climb to divine mastery. Some have become such souls, others are still hampered but growing. He desires the increasing affirmation of Agni so that all may advance to a rich and all-comprehending universality.]

अग्न ओजिष्ठमा भर द्युम्नमस्मभ्यमध्रिगो ।
प्र नो राया परीणसा रत्सि वाजाय पन्थाम् ॥१॥

1. O Flame, O Ray in our limited existence, bring for us an illumination full of utter energy, by an all-encompassing felicity cleave forward our path towards the plenitude.

त्वं नो अग्ने अद्भुत क्रत्वा दक्षस्य मंहना ।
त्वे असुर्यमारुहत् क्राणा मित्रो न यज्ञियः ॥२॥

2. O Flame, thou supreme and wonderful thing, it is thou who by force of will becomest in us the greatness of discerning power; in thee the all-harmonising Friend[1] in the sacrifice accomplishes the work and climbs to divine mastery.[2]

[1] Mitra, the Lord of Love, who introduces the principle of harmony into the workings of the divine effort in us and thus combines all the lines of our advance, all the strands of our sacrifice until the work is accomplished in the supreme unity of Knowledge, Power and Delight.

[2] *Asuryam*, the god-power, the mastering force of the Lord, the divine "Asura" in us.

त्वं नो अग्न एषां गयं पुष्टिं च वर्धय ।
ये स्तोमेभिः प्र सूरयो नरो मघान्यानशुः ॥ ३॥

3. Thou, O Strength, increase the advancing[3] and the growth of these who are splendid souls of knowledge that by their affirmations of thee attain to our fullnesses.

ये अग्ने चन्द्र ते गिरः शुम्भन्त्यश्वराधसः ।
शुष्मेभिः शुष्मिणो नरो दिवश्चिद् येषां बृहत्
सुकीर्तिर्बोधति त्मना ॥ ४॥

4. These are they, O Strength, O Delight, who have a happy richness of the swift forces of life and turn to a happy light the words of the thought, souls puissant with hero-puissances, for whom even in heaven[4] is the Vastness; of itself its perfect working awakes to knowledge for these.

तव त्ये अग्ने अर्चयो भ्राजन्तो यन्ति धृष्णुया ।
परिज्मानो न विद्युतः स्वानो रथो न वाजयुः ॥ ५॥

5. These are thy flaming rays, O Strength, that go blazing violently and are like lightnings that run over all the quarters and are like a resonant chariot that speeds towards the plenitude.

नू नो अग्न ऊतये सबाधसश्च रातये ।
अस्माकासश्च सूरयो विश्वा आशास्तरीषणि ॥ ६॥

6. Now, O Strength, alike may those that are beset and hampered attain to expansion and the soul's riches and may these our splendid souls of knowledge traverse all the regions[5] and beyond.

[3] Or attainment.
[4] That is to say, on the heights of the pure mentality where it meets with and passes into the vastness of the superconscient.
[5] The regions of the heavens of the mental existence which have all to be embraced in our consciousness and overpassed.

त्वं नो अग्ने अङ्गिरः स्तुतः स्तवान आ भर ।
होतर्विभ्वासहं रयिं स्तोतृभ्यः स्तवसे च न उतैधि पृत्सु नो वृधे ॥७॥

7. O Strength, O Soul of Puissance, when thou art affirmed and in thy affirming, bring to us, O priest of the offering, felicity[6] of an all-pervading forcefulness for all that affirm thee and for thy affirmation again. March with us in our battles that we may grow.

[6] That richness and abundance in the soul full of divine possessions which is its spiritual prosperity or felicity, an image of the infinite store of the divine Bliss and by which it advances to an ever greater and more richly-equipped wideness of its being.

The Eleventh Hymn to Agni

A HYMN TO THE DIVINE PRIEST AND SACRIFICIAL FLAME

[The Rishi hymns the birth of the wakeful and discerning sacrificial Flame who is vision and will-power, the seer whose passion of effort turns into a divine knowledge, in the heavens of mind. This seer-will the inspired words of the Thought have to increase. It is a thing of puissance, the Son of Force, and found by the ancient Souls of luminous puissance concealed in the growths of earth, in all the experiences that the soul here seeks to enjoy.]

जनस्य गोपा अजनिष्ट जागृविरग्निः सुदक्षः सुविताय नव्यसे ।
घृतप्रतीको बृहता दिविस्पृशा द्युमद् वि भाति भरतेभ्यः शुचिः ॥१॥

1. The protector of the creature is born, the Flame that is wakeful and perfect in discernment, for a new march to felicity. His front is of the clarities, luminously he shines wide so that the vastness of him touches the heavens, he is pure for the bringers of the riches.

यज्ञस्य केतुं प्रथमं पुरोहितमग्निं नरस्त्रिषधस्थे समीधिरे ।
इन्द्रेण देवैः सरथं स बर्हिषि सीदन्नि होता यजथाय सुक्रतुः ॥२॥

2. Men have kindled high in the triple world[1] of the session the Flame supreme to be vision in the sacrifice and the vicar set in front; he comes in one chariot with the God-Mind and the divine Powers and sits on the seat of sacrifice, the Priest of the oblation perfect in will-power for the sacrificing.

[1] The triple world of mind, life and body in which the session of our sacrifice takes place or in which the work of self-perfection proceeds.

असंमृष्टो जायसे मात्रोः शुचिर्मन्द्रः कविरुदतिष्ठो विवस्वतः ।
घृतेन त्वावर्धयन्नग्न आहुत धूमस्ते केतुरभवद् दिवि श्रितः ॥ ३॥

3. Unovercome and pure[2] thou art born from thy mothers twain; thou hast risen up a rapturous seer from the all-luminous sun; they have increased thee with the clarity, O Flame, and the passion-smoke of thee becomes vision when it reaches and lodges in the heavens.

अग्निर्नो यज्ञमुप वेतु साधुयाऽग्निं नरो वि भरन्ते गृहेगृहे ।
अग्निर्दूतो अभवद्धव्यवाहनोऽग्निं वृणाना वृणते कविक्रतुम् ॥ ४॥

4. May the Flame come to our sacrifice with power to accomplish; the Flame men carry into every room of their dwelling-place; the Flame has become our messenger and the bearer of our offering; when men accept the Flame into themselves, it is the seer-will that they accept.

तुभ्येदमग्ने मधुमत्तमं वचस्तुभ्यं मनीषा इयमस्तु शं हृदे ।
त्वां गिरः सिन्धुमिवावनीर्महीरा पृणन्ति शवसा वर्धयन्ति च ॥ ५॥

5. For thee, O Flame, this Word fraught fullest with the honey,[3] for thee this Thought and may it be the peace and bliss in thy heart. For the words of the Thought satisfy and increase thee as those great fostering streams[4] fill and increase that ocean.

त्वामग्ने अङ्गिरसो गुहा हितमन्वविन्दञ्छिश्रियाणं वनेवने ।
स जायसे मथ्यमानः सहो महत् त्वामाहुः सहसस्पुत्रमङ्गिरः ॥ ६॥

2 Or, pure without cleansing.
3 The honeyed Soma-wine, outflowing of the principle of Delight in things.
4 The seven rivers or movements which descend from the superconscient being and fill the conscious ocean of our existence. They are called the Mothers, the fostering Cows, the Mighty Ones of Heaven, the Waters of Knowledge, the streams of the Truth, etc.

6. O Flame, the souls of puissance[5] discovered thee hidden in the secret place,[6] lodging in every object of delight; by our pressure on thee thou art born, a mighty force; the Son of Force they have called thee, O Puissance.

[5] The seven ancient seers or fathers, the Angiras Rishis, sons of Agni and divine or human types of the seer-will.
[6] The subconscient heart in things.

The Twelfth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF MAN'S ASPIRATION TO THE TRUTH

[The Rishi invokes this flame of the Divine Force, this vast Lord of the superconscient Truth, this Truth-conscious One, to accept thought and word into himself, become truth-conscient in man and cleave out the many streams of the Truth. Not by mere force of effort nor under the law of the duality can the Truth be attained, but by the Truth itself. But there are not only powers of this Force that battle with the falsehood and guard and conquer, there are others also who have helped so far in the march, but who would keep to the foundation of the falsehood because they cling to the present self-expression of man and refuse to advance beyond it; these in their self-will speak the word of crookedness to the Truth-seeker. By the sacrifice and by submission in the sacrifice man, the ever-advancing pilgrim, brings near to him his wide dwelling-place beyond, the seat and home of the Truth.]

प्राग्नये बृहते यज्ञियाय ऋतस्य वृष्णे असुराय मन्म ।
घृतं न यज्ञ आस्ये सुपूतं गिरं भरे वृषभाय प्रतीचीम् ॥१॥

1. To Will, master of sacrifice, the Mighty One, the vast lord and diffuser of the Truth I bring forward my thought as an offering and it is as the clarified butter of the sacrifice purified in the mouth of the flame; my word[1] I bring forward that goes to meet its lord.[2]

[1] To turn thought and word into form and expression of the superconscient Truth which is hidden beyond the division and duality of the mental and physical existence was the central idea of the Vedic discipline and the foundation of its mysteries.

[2] The Bull; the thought is symbolised as the shining cow fronting and offering itself to the Godhead.

ऋतं चिकित्व ऋतमिच्चिकिद्ध्यृतस्य धारा अनु तृन्धि पूर्वीः ।
नाहं यातुं सहसा न द्वयेन ऋतं सपाम्यरुषस्य वृष्णः ॥ २॥

2. O conscious seer of the Truth, the Truth alone perceive in my consciousness; cleave out[3] many flowing streams of the Truth.[4] Not by force, nor by the duality can I achieve the journey nor attain to the Truth of the shining Worker, the fertilising Lord.

कया नो अग्न ऋतयन्नृतेन भुवो नवेदा उचथस्य नव्यः ।
वेदा मे देव ऋतुपा ऋतूनां नाहं पतिं सनितुरस्य रायः ॥ ३॥

3. By what thought in me, O Will, shalt thou seeking the Truth by the Truth become the impeller to knowledge of a new word? The godhead who guards the times and seasons[5] of the Truth, knows all in me, but him I know not, the lord of that all-possessing felicity.

के ते अग्ने रिपवे बन्धनासः के पायवः सनिषन्त द्युमन्तः ।
के धासिमग्ने अनृतस्य पान्ति क आसतो वचसः सन्ति गोपाः ॥ ४॥

4. Who are they, O Will, that are thy binders of the Enemy? who are the shining ones, the guardians, the seekers after possession and conquest? Who, O Will, protect the foundations of the falsehood? who are the keepers of a present[6] word?

सखायस्ते विषुणा अग्न एते शिवासः सन्तो अशिवा अभूवन् ।
अधूर्षत स्वयमेते वचोभिर्ऋजूयते वृजिनानि ब्रुवन्तः ॥ ५॥

[3] From the rock in the hill where they are guarded by the opposing powers.
[4] The descent of the superconscient into our life was imaged as the rain of heaven; it formed the seven celestial rivers that flow down upon the earth-consciousness.
[5] The periods, sometimes described as years, sometimes as the twelve symbolic months of the progress of the sacrifice.
[6] Or, false word. In either case it means the old falsehood as opposed to the "new word" of the Truth of which Agni has to create the knowledge.

5. These are comrades of thine, O Will, who have gone astray from thee; benignant were they, they have become malignant. These do violence to themselves by their words speaking crooked things to the seeker after straightness.

यस्ते अग्ने नमसा यज्ञमीट्ट ऋतं स पात्यरुषस्य वृष्णः ।
तस्य क्षयः पृथुरा साधुरेतु प्रसर्स्राणस्य नहुषस्य शेषः ॥ ६ ॥

6. But he, O Will, who desires with submission thy sacrifice, guards the truth of the shining Worker, the Fertiliser.[7] To him may there come that wide habitation[8] in which all is perfected, even that which is left[9] for man the pilgrim to accomplish in his forward journeying.

[7] "The shining Bull or Male", but the latter word means also the rainer, fertiliser or diffuser of abundance and sometimes the strong and abundant, the former seems to bear also the sense of active or moving.

[8] The plane of the superconscient Truth or world of Swar beyond mental Heaven and physical earth in which all is accomplished that here we strive after; it is described as the wide habitation and the wide and fear-free pasture of the shining cows.

[9] This world is sometimes described as what is left or the excess; it is the additional field of being beyond this triplicity of mind, life and body which constitute our normal state of existence.

The Thirteenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF AFFIRMATION OF THE DIVINE WILL

[The Rishi declares the power of the Word affirming the Divine Will who attains to the touch of heaven for man. That Will affirmed in us by the word becomes the priest of our sacrifice and the winner in us of the divine riches and of the energy that conquers. This godhead contains all the others in its being as the nave of a wheel contains the spokes and therefore brings us all the varied wealth of the spiritual felicity.]

अर्चन्तस्त्वा हवामहेऽर्चन्तः समिधीमहि ।
अग्ने अर्चन्त ऊतये ॥ १॥

1. Chanting the word that illumines we call to thee, chanting the word that illumines we kindle thee, O Will, chanting the word that illumines for our increase.

अग्नेः स्तोमं मनामहे सिध्रमद्य दिविस्पृशः ।
देवस्य द्रविणस्यवः ॥ २॥

2. Today we seize with the mind the affirmation all-effective, the hymn of the Will, of the godhead that seeks for us our divine substance,[1] of him who touches the heavens.

अग्निर्जुषत नो गिरो होता यो मानुषेष्वा ।
स यक्षद् दैव्यं जनम् ॥ ३॥

[1] The divine riches which are the object of the sacrifice.

3. May the Will accept with love our words, he who is here as the priest in men; may he offer the sacrifice to the divine people.

त्वमग्ने सप्रथा असि जुष्टो होता वरेण्यः ।
त्वया यज्ञं वि तन्वते ॥ ४॥

4. Very wide and vast art thou, O Will, the priest of our offering desirable and beloved; by thee men extend wide the form of their sacrifice.

त्वामग्ने वाजसातमं विप्रा वर्धन्ति सुष्टुतम् ।
स नो रास्व सुवीर्यम् ॥ ५॥

5. Thee, once rightly affirmed, the illumined increase, O Will, so that thou conquerest utterly the plenitude; therefore do thou lavish on us a complete hero-energy.

अग्ने नेमिरराँ इव देवाँस्त्वं परिभूरसि ।
आ राधश्चित्रमृञ्जसे ॥ ६॥

6. O Will, as the nave of a wheel contains the spokes, so thou containest in thy being all the gods; thou shalt bring to us a varied joy of those riches.

The Fourteenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE FINDER OF LIGHT AND TRUTH

[The Rishi declares Agni as the Priest of the sacrifice, the slayer of the powers of Darkness, the finder of the world of the Sun of Truth, of his radiant herds and of his luminous waters; he is the seer in us who is increased by the clarities of right thought and speech.]

अग्निं स्तोमेन बोधय समिधानो अमर्त्यम् ।
हव्या देवेषु नो दधत् ॥ १॥

1. Awaken the Flame by the word that affirms him, kindle high the Immortal; let him place our offerings in the godheads.

तमध्वरेष्वीळते देवं मर्ता अमर्त्यम् ।
यजिष्ठं मानुषे जने ॥ २॥

2. Him in their pilgrim sacrifices mortal men desire and adore, the divine, the immortal, who is strongest for sacrifice in the human creature.

तं हि शश्वन्त ईळते स्रुचा देवं घृतश्चुता ।
अग्निं हव्याय वोळ्हवे ॥ ३॥

3. Him, the godhead, man's continuous generations adore with the ladle[1] dripping with the clarities; the Will they adore that he may bear their offering.

[1] This ladle is the constantly lifted movement of man's aspiration towards the Truth and the Godhead.

अग्निर्जातो अरोचत घ्नन् दस्यूञ्ज्योतिषा तमः ।
अविन्दद् गा अपः स्वः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Born, the Flame shines out slaying the Destroyers,[2] yea, he smites the Darkness with the Light and he finds the shining Herds[3] and those Waters and the luminous world.[4]

अग्निमीळेन्यं कविं घृतपृष्ठं सपर्यत ।
वेतु मे शृणवद्धवम् ॥ ५ ॥

5. The Will serve and seek, the object of our adoration, the Seer with his surface of the clarities; may he come, may he hearken to my call.

अग्निं घृतेन वावृधुः स्तोमेभिर्विश्वचर्षणिम् ।
स्वाधीभिर्वचस्युभिः ॥ ६ ॥

6. The Will men increase by the offering of their clarities, they increase the universal doer of their works by their hymns of affirmation which place aright the thought, which find the revealing word.

[2] The Titans, dividers of our unity and completeness of being and sons of the Mother of Division, who are powers of the nether cave and the darkness.

[3] The Herds and the Waters are the two principal images of the Veda; the former are the trooping Rays of the divine Sun, herds of the luminous Consciousness; the waters are the outpouring of the luminous movement and impulse of the divine or supramental existence.

[4] Swar, the world of divine solar light to which we have to ascend and which is revealed by the release of the luminous herds from the nether cave and the consequent uprising of the divine Sun.

The Fifteenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE DIVINE UPHOLDER AND CONQUEROR

[The Rishi hymns the Divine Will as the Seer and the Mighty One, the upholder of the Bliss and the Truth, by which men attain to the supreme-seated godheads. He breaks leonine through an army of opposers, sees and confirms for man all the possible births and manifestations of the soul, forms in him the secret superconscient plane and by knowledge delivers him into that vast beatitude.]

प्र वेधसे कवये वेद्याय गिरं भरे यशसे पूर्व्याय ।
घृतप्रसत्तो असुरः सुशेवो रायो धर्ता धरुणो वस्वो अग्निः ॥१॥

1. To the Seer and Ordainer who is the object of knowledge I bring the offering of the Word, to the glorious and victorious, to the pristine and supreme. He is the Mighty One accomplished in joy who goes forward to the clarities, the strength that is holder of the bliss and holder of the substance.

ऋतेन ऋतं धरुणं धारयन्त यज्ञस्य शाके परमे व्योमन् ।
दिवो धर्मन् धरुणे सेदुषो नॄञ्जातैरजाताँ अभि ये ननक्षुः ॥२॥

2. By the Truth they uphold the Truth that holds all, in the power of the Sacrifice, in the supreme ether, even they who by the godheads born in them travel to the godheads unborn, to the Powers who are seated for ever in the Law that upholds the heavens.

अंहोयुवस्तन्वस्तन्वते वि वयो महद् दुष्टरं पूर्व्याय ।
स संवतो नवजातस्तुतुर्यात् सिंहं न क्रुद्धमभितः परि ष्ठुः ॥ ३॥

3. Putting evil away from them they create wide-extended forms and embodiments of the soul that are a vast birth and indestructible manifestation for this first and supreme godhead; new-born he shall break through armies that join like converging floods; they stand encompassing him like hunters who enring an angry lion.

मातेव यद् भरसे पप्रथानो जनंजनं धायसे चक्षसे च ।
वयोवयो जरसे यद् दधानः परि त्मना विषुरूपो जिगासि ॥ ४॥

4. Thou art even as a mother when in thy wideness thou bearest in thy arms birth after birth to the firm foundation and to the vision. When thou holdest in thee and enjoyest manifestation after manifestation, thou movest abroad with thy self in many different forms.

वाजो नु ते शवसस्पात्वन्तमुरुं दोघं धरुणं देव रायः ।
पदं न तायुर्गुहा दधानो महो राये चितयन्नत्रिमस्पः ॥ ५॥

5. May our plenitude possess the furthest limit of thy might, O godhead, where in its wideness and all-yielding abundance it upholds the bliss. Thou art he that forms and upholds in himself that secret abode to which we move; by thy awakening of him into knowledge thou hast rescued the enjoyer of things for a vast beatitude.

The Sixteenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN TO THE BRINGER OF ALL DESIRABLE GOOD

[The Rishi affirms the Divine Will in man as the offering and representative priest who brings light and strength and inspired knowledge and every desirable good; for he is the aspirer by works in whom is the puissance of all the gods and the full plenitude of their force.]

बृहद् वयो हि भानवेऽर्चा देवायाग्नये ।
यं मित्रं न प्रशस्तिभिर्मर्तासो दधिरे पुरः ॥१॥

1. Sing thou out by the word a vast manifestation for the shining Light, for the divine, for the Will whom mortals by their expressions of his godhead as the Friend[1] put in their front.

स हि द्युभिर्जनानां होता दक्षस्य बाह्वोः ।
वि हव्यमग्निरानुषग्भगो न वारमृण्वति ॥२॥

2. The Will is the priest of offering of the peoples; by the illuminations of the discerning mind he bears abroad in both his arms the continuous order[2] of their offerings and as the divine enjoyer[3] he moves to his good.

[1] Mitra. Agni contains and is all the gods. Mortals have to discover in the action of the divine Will the light, love and harmony of the true knowledge and true existence, the Mitra-power; it is in this aspect that he has to be set in front of the human consciousness as the representative priest in the sacrifice.

[2] As the Purohit, the representative priest in the sacrifice and the leader in the van of its march. He stands in front of our consciousness, leader of all our powers, to guide and carry on our Godward work, so that there shall be no interruption, no gap in the order of the sacrifice, the right stages of its march to the gods, the right placing of its works according to the times and seasons of the Truth.

[3] The Divine Will becomes the Enjoyer Bhaga, brother power of Mitra, who enjoys all delight of existence but by Mitra's power of pure discernment and according to the light, truth and harmony of the divine living.

अस्य स्तोमे मघोनः सख्ये वृद्धशोचिषः ।
विश्वा यस्मिन् तुविष्वणि समर्ये शुष्ममादधुः ॥ ३॥

3. In the affirmation of him and in his comradeship when he has increased his flame of purity are all the lords of the plenitude;[4] for all things are in the sound of his many voices and on him, the aspirer in his works, they have laid the burden of their strength.

अधा ह्यग्न एषां सुवीर्यस्य मंहना ।
तमिद् यह्वं न रोदसी परि श्रवो बभूवतुः ॥ ४॥

4. Even now, O Will, may there be the full plenitude of their utter force. Around this mighty Will earth and heaven have become as if one voice of inspired knowledge.[5]

नू न एहि वार्यमग्ने गृणान आ भर ।
ये वयं ये च सूरयः स्वस्ति धामहे सचोतैधि पृत्सु नो वृधे ॥ ५॥

5. Even now come to us, O Will, hymned by our words and bring to us our desirable good. May we who are here and those luminous masters of knowledge together found that blissful state of our being. March with us in our battles that we may grow.

[4] The gods; the Divine Force contains and sustains all the other divine powers in their working; in him resides therefore the power of all the other godheads.

[5] The whole physical and the whole mental consciousness become full of the knowledge which streams into them from the supramental plane and they, as it were, turn into the supramental light and action around the divine Seer-Will as he moves about in them at his work of transfiguration.

The Seventeenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF ENLARGEMENT AND ULTIMATE ASPIRATION

[A state arrives in which man goes beyond the mere subtlety and fineness of the intelligence and reaches to a rich and manifold largeness of soul. Even then though he has now the wide law of his being which is our right foundation, he needs a force greater than his to lead him; for largeness and multiplicity of soul-force and knowledge are not enough, there must be the divine truth in thought, word and act. For we have to attain beyond the enlarged mental being to the beatitude of a state beyond mind. Agni has the light and the force, the Word and the true impulsion, the embracing knowledge and the achieving power. He shall bring the divine wealth in his chariot and carry us towards the blissful state and the supreme good.]

आ यज्ञैर्देव मर्त्य इत्था तव्यांसमूतये ।
अग्निं कृते स्वध्वरे पूरुरीळीतावसे ॥ १॥

1. I am mortal who call thee, O godhead, for thy strength is greater than mine and it is righteous in its acts. Let the man of multiple soul when he has made perfect his sacrifice, adore the Will for his increasing.

अस्य हि स्वयशस्तर आसा विधर्मन् मन्यसे ।
तं नाकं चित्रशोचिषं मन्द्रं परो मनीषया ॥ २॥

2. Man, thou who hast won to the wide law of thy being,[1] by

[1] The larger working of consciousness and power in the being by which the rigid limitations of the ordinary mind and life and physical being are broken and man is able to experience a full inner life and open himself to communication with all the planes of his own and of the cosmic existence.

the mouth of this flame thou shalt be self-mightier to attain and shalt mentalise the paradise of his richest flamings, the paradise of rapture beyond the thought of the mind.[2]

अस्य वासा उ अर्चिषा य आयुक्त तुजा गिरा ।
दिवो न यस्य रेतसा बृहच्छोचन्त्यर्चयः ॥ ३॥

3. For by the mouth and radiance of his flame he has yoked himself with the impelling force and the word, and vast as if with the seed of heaven blazes out the purity of his rays.

अस्य क्रत्वा विचेतसो दस्मस्य वसु रथ आ ।
अधा विश्वासु हव्योऽग्निर्विक्षु प्र शस्यते ॥ ४॥

4. Because by the force of his workings he has the embracing knowledge and the achieving power, his chariot carries a divine wealth; therefore in all creatures he is the godhead to be expressed and the helper to whom men call.

नू न इद्धि वार्यमासा सचन्त सूरयः ।
ऊर्जो नपादभिष्टये पाहि शग्धि स्वस्तय उतैधि पृत्सु नो वृधे ॥ ५॥

5. Even now and even for us may the luminous masters of knowledge be firm by the mouth of the flame to our supreme good.[3] O Son of Energy, guard us so that we may enter in, be mighty to attain our blissful state. March with us in our battles that we may grow.

[2] The state of bliss of which Swar, the supramental plane of existence, is the basis.
[3] The luminous gods in us must keep our consciousness firmly attached to the light and truth that is brought by the workings of the Will so that we may not fall away from the right movement and its divine joy.

The Eighteenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE LORDS OF THE PLENITUDE

[The Divine Will is invoked to complete the manifestation of the divine powers after the second state of the soul when it has passed beyond the mere physical being and is full of the perfect energy of the vital plane; for the gods have given all the life's fifty steeds of swiftness, Agni is there as the light and flame of its far-extended existence which has broken the limitations of the material being and he is full of the joys of this new and rich supra-physical life. Now the third state, the free mental being, is to be perfected by a richly varied and luminous play of thought and word ending in the manifestation of the highest reach of the mental realms, the power of the supramental Light in the mentality; there begins the manifestation of the intuitive and inspired mind. Agni has to create that vastness and light and divinity of the Truth-knowledge and so crown with it the already attained free swiftness of force and wide range of life and enjoyment proper to the perfected and god-filled vitality.]

प्रातरग्निः पुरुप्रियो विशः स्तवेतातिथिः ।
विश्वानि यो अमर्त्यों हव्या मर्तेषु रण्यति ॥ १ ॥

1. Let the Will be affirmed in the dawning,[1] guest of the creature with his many delights who, immortal in mortals, takes joy in all their offerings.

द्विताय मृक्तवाहसे स्वस्य दक्षस्य मंहना ।
इन्दुं स धत्त आनुषक् स्तोता चित् ते अमर्त्य ॥ २ ॥

[1] The dawning of the divine Dawn of the higher knowledge in the mind.

2. He is the plenitude of his own discerning mind for the second soul[2] when it bears the purified intelligence; then it holds in itself the continual wine of delight and affirms thee, O Immortal.

तं वो दीर्घायुशोचिषं गिरा हुवे मघोनाम् ।
अरिष्टो येषां रथो व्यश्वदावन्नीयते ॥ ३॥

3. Such art thou I call, the pure flame of this far-extending existence for the lords of the plenitude whose chariot inviolate ranges wide,[3] O giver of the steeds of swiftness, —

चित्रा वा येषु दीधितिरासन्नुक्था पान्ति ये ।
स्तीर्णं बर्हिः स्वर्णरे श्रवांसि दधिरे परि ॥ ४॥

4. The lords of the plenitude in whom is rich light of the thought and they keep the words of our utterance in their mouth;[4] the fullness of the soul has been spread as a seat of sacrifice in the power[5] of the luminous world and all its inspirations are set round about.

ये मे पञ्चाशतं ददुरश्वानां सधस्तुति ।
द्युमदग्ने महि श्रवो बृहत् कृधि मघोनां नृवदमृत नृणाम् ॥ ५॥

2 Dwita, the god or Rishi of the second plane of the human ascent. It is that of the Life-force, the plane of fulfilled force, desire, free range of the vital powers which are no longer limited by the strict limitations of this mould of Matter. We become conscious of and conscious in new realms, immense ranges of life, the "far-extending existence" of the next verse, which are screened off from our ordinary physical consciousness. Trita is the god or Rishi of the third plane, full of luminous mental kingdoms unknown to the physical mind.

3 In these new worlds of life the divine movement is now fulfilled there and ranges unpierced by the "harms" of the powers of Death and Darkness.

4 This verse describes the farther ascent of the movement from the realms of Dwita to the realms of Trita.

5 Swarnara, often spoken of as if it were a country; it is not Swar itself, the utter superconscient plane, but the power of itself which the light of that world forms in the pure mentality. Here its inspirations and illuminations descend and take their place round the seat of the sacrifice. These are elsewhere called the scouts, "éclaireurs", of the solar Deity, Varuna.

5. They who have given me fifty steeds of swiftness[6] with a perfect affirming, the divine souls that are lords of the plenitude, for them, O Flame-Immortal, create the large, the vast, the luminous knowledge full of the godheads.

[6] The Ashwa or Horse is the symbol of the Life-Force as the Cow is the symbol of the Light. Fifty, hundred, a thousand are numbers symbolic of completeness.

The Nineteenth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE REVEALING RAY AND CONQUERING WILL

[That epiphany of the soul is sung in which all the coverings of its higher states are penetrated and open to the divine light. It is the opening of the whole third plane of our existence which was before as a fortified city with its gates closed to the soul embodied in Matter. By this new action of the Divine Force the mental and physical consciousness are wedded to the high supramental which was till now separated from them and the life-force blazing in its works with the heat of the divine Sun is harmonised with the play of the sun-ray of the divine knowledge.]

अभ्यवस्थाः प्र जायन्ते प्र वव्रेर्वव्रिश्चिकेत ।
उपस्थे मातुर्वि चष्टे ॥ १॥

1. State upon state is born, covering upon covering opens to consciousness of knowledge; in the lap of its Mother[1] the soul sees.[2]

जुहुरे वि चितयन्तोऽनिमिषं नृम्णं पान्ति ।
आ दृळ्हां पुरं विविशुः ॥ २॥

2. Awakened to an embracing knowledge men cast in thee the offering, they guard a sleepless manhood, they enter into the fortified city.

आ श्वैत्रेयस्य जन्तवो द्युमद् वर्धन्त कृष्टयः ।
निष्कग्रीवो बृहदुक्थ एना मध्वा न वाजयुः ॥ ३॥

[1] Aditi, the infinite consciousness, Mother of all things.
[2] With the all-embracing vision of the supramental infinite consciousness.

3. Men who are born in the world and labour at the work increase the luminous state of the son of the white-shining Mother,[3] he wears the golden necklace,[4] he utters the vast word; with that and with the honey wine of delight he becomes a seeker of the plenitude.

प्रियं दुग्धं न काम्यमजामि जाम्योः सचा ।
घर्मो न वाजजठरोऽदब्धः शश्वतो दभः ॥ ४ ॥

4. He is as the delightful and desirable yield of the Mother,[5] he is that which being without a fellow[6] yet dwells with the two companions, he is the heat of the Light and the belly of the plenitude, he is the eternal unconquerable who tramples all things under his feet.

क्रीळन् नो रश्म आ भुवः सं भस्मना वायुना वेविदानः ।
ता अस्य सन् धृषजो न तिग्माः सुसंशिता वक्ष्यो वक्षणेस्थाः ॥ ५ ॥

5. O Ray, be born in us and dwell there at play harmonising thy knowledge with the blazing life-god.[7] May these flames of the will that bear our works be violent and keen and sharpened to a perfect intensity and firmly founded in the Bearer of all things.

[3] Aditi; her dark state or black form is Diti, mother of the powers of Darkness.
[4] Of the rays of the divine Sun of Truth.
[5] The milk of the Cow, Aditi.
[6] The all-creating and self-sufficing Supermind high and remote and separated in our consciousness from the mental and physical planes; yet it is really there behind their action and reaction upon each other and in the liberated state of man the separation is abolished.
[7] Vayu.

The Twentieth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE WORK AND THE ATTAINMENT

[The Rishi desires a state of spiritual wealth full of the divine working in which nothing shall fall away to the division and the crookedness. So, increasing by our works the divine Force in us daily, we shall attain to the Bliss and the Truth, the rapture of the Light and the rapture of the Force.]

यमग्ने वाजसातम त्वं चिन् मन्यसे रयिम् ।
तं नो गीर्भिः श्रवाय्यं देवत्रा पनया युजम् ॥१॥

1. O Will, O conqueror of our plenitude, the felicity which thou alone canst conceive in the mind, that make full of inspiration by our words and set it to labour in the gods as our helper.

ये अग्ने नेरयन्ति ते वृद्धा उग्रस्य शवसः ।
अप द्वेषो अप ह्वरोऽन्यव्रतस्य सश्चिरे ॥२॥

2. They who are powers increased of thee in the fierceness of thy flame and strength, yet impel us not on the path, they fall away to the division, they cleave to the crookedness of a law that is other than thine.

होतारं त्वा वृणीमहेऽग्ने दक्षस्य साधनम् ।
यज्ञेषु पूर्व्यं गिरा प्रयस्वन्तो हवामहे ॥३॥

3. Thee, O Will, we take to us as the priest of the offering and the accomplisher of a discerning knowledge; holding for thee all our delights we call thee the ancient and supreme to our sacrifices by the word;

इत्था यथा त ऊतये सहसावन् दिवेदिवे ।
राय ऋताय सुक्रतो गोभिः ष्याम सधमादो
वीरैः स्याम सधमादः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Rightly and in such wise that, O forceful god, O perfect power of works, we may increase thee day by day, that we may have the Bliss, that we may have the Truth, that we may have perfect rapture by the Rays of the knowledge, that we may have perfect rapture by the Heroes of the Force.

The Twenty-First Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE DIVINE FLAME IN HUMANITY

[The Rishi invokes the divine Flame to burn as the divine Man in humanity and to raise us to our perfection in the seats of the Truth and the Bliss.]

मनुष्वत् त्वा नि धीमहि मनुष्वत् समिधीमहि ।
अग्ने मनुष्वदङ्गिरो देवान् देवयते यज ॥१॥

1. As the human[1] we set thee within us, as the human we kindle thee; O Flame, O Seer-Puissance, as the human offer sacrifice to the gods for the seeker of the godheads.

त्वं हि मानुषे जनेऽग्ने सुप्रीत इध्यसे ।
स्रुचस्त्वा यन्त्यानुषक् सुजात सर्पिरासुते ॥२॥

2. O Flame, thou burnest in the human creature when thou art satisfied with his offerings; his ladles go to thee unceasingly, O perfect in thy birth, O presser out of the running richness.

त्वां विश्वे सजोषसो देवासो दूतमक्रत ।
सपर्यन्तस्त्वा कवे यज्ञेषु देवमीळते ॥३॥

3. Thee all the gods with one heart of love made their envoy; O seer, men serve and adore thee in their sacrifices as the godhead.

[1] The godhead descending into man assumes the veil of humanity. The god is eternally perfect, unborn, fixed in the Truth and Joy; descending, he is born in man, grows, gradually manifests his completeness, attains as if by battle and difficult progress to the Truth and Joy. Man is the thinker, the god is the eternal seer; but the Divine veils his seerhood in the forms of thought and life to assist the development of the mortal into immortality.

देवं वो देवयज्ययाऽग्निमीळीत मर्त्यः ।
समिद्धः शुक्र दीदिह्यृतस्य योनिमासदः
ससस्य योनिमासदः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Let mortal man adore the Will, the divine, by sacrifice to the powers divine; but thou, O Brightness, shine out high-kindled; enter into the home of the Truth, enter into the home of the Bliss.

The Twenty-Second Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE JOURNEY TO THE PERFECT JOY

[Man, the eater of things, seeks a fulfilment of his desires in a final equality of delight. To this end he has to be purified by the divine Flame, the Seer-Will who holds in himself the conscious vision and the utter rapture. By increasing him in us we shall journey forward with our progressing sacrifice and the gods will utterly manifest themselves. We must entertain this divine Force as the master of our house, our physical and mental body, and give it all the objects of our enjoyment as its food.]

प्र विश्वसामन्नत्रिवदर्चा पावकशोचिषे ।
यो अध्वरेष्वीड्यो होता मन्द्रतमो विशि ॥१॥

1. Man who seekest thy equal fulfilment in all, sing as the enjoyer of things the word of illumination to him of the bright purifying flame, to the object of our adoration in the march of our sacrifices, to the priest of the offering most rapturous in the creature.

न्यग्निं जातवेदसं दधाता देवमृत्विजम् ।
प्र यज्ञ एत्वानुषगद्या देवव्यचस्तमः ॥२॥

2. Set within thee Will that knows all the births, the divine sacrificer in the seasons; today let thy sacrifice march forward unceasingly, thy sacrifice shall open to thee the whole epiphany of the godheads.

चिकित्विन्मनसं त्वा देवं मर्तास ऊतये ।
वरेण्यस्य तेऽवस इयानासो अमन्महि ॥३॥

3. Mortals, we have set our mind on thee the divine, for thou hast the mind of conscious vision; we meditate on thee as we journey, that we may increase and for the increase too of thee, the supremely desirable.

अग्ने चिकिद्ध्यस्य न इदं वचः सहस्य ।
तं त्वा सुशिप्र दंपते स्तोमैर्वर्धन्त्यत्रयो गीर्भिः शुम्भन्त्यत्रयः ॥ ४ ॥

4. Awake then, O Will, to the vision of this within us; this is our word to thee, O Lord of Force. Strong-jawed enjoyer, master of our house, the eaters of things increase thee by their affirmations and by their words they make thee a thing of bright gladness.

The Twenty-Third Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE RICH AND CONQUERING SOUL

[The Rishi desires through Agni that opulence of the divine Light against which the armies of darkness cannot stand; for it overpowers them by its plenitude and force. This it does on all the successive planes of the soul's labour and in each of them man gets, by this divine Force that is the true and transcendent Being, all the objects of his desire that they contain.]

अग्ने सहन्तमा भर द्युम्नस्य प्रासहा रयिम् ।
विश्वा यश्चर्षणीरभ्यासा वाजेषु सासहत् ॥१॥

1. Bring to us, O Strength most forcefully prevailing, that forceful opulence of the Light which in all the fields of our labour shall by force prevail with thy mouth of flame to enter into the plenitudes.

तमग्ने पृतनाषहं रयिं सहस्व आ भर ।
त्वं हि सत्यो अद्भुतो दाता वाजस्य गोमतः ॥२॥

2. O Flame, O Might, that rich felicity bring which shall violently overpower the armies that are embattled against us; for thou art the true in being, the transcendent and wonderful, who gives to man the luminous plenitude.

विश्वे हि त्वा सजोषसो जनासो वृक्तबर्हिषः ।
होतारं सद्मसु प्रियं व्यन्ति वार्या पुरु ॥३॥

3. All these peoples who with one heart of love have made

clear their seat of sacrifice, find in the dwelling-places[1] of the soul thee, the priest of sacrifice, the beloved, and they reach in them their many objects of desire.

स हि ष्मा विश्वचर्षणिरभिमाति सहो दधे ।
अग्न एषु क्षयेष्वा रेवन्नः शुक्र दीदिहि द्युमत् पावक दीदिहि ॥ ४॥

4. This is the labourer in all man's works and he holds in himself an all-besieging force. O pure-brilliant Flame, shine out full of joy and opulence in these our habitations, shine out full of light, O our purifier.

[1] The "seats" or homes of the soul, which progresses from plane to plane and makes of each a habitation. They are sometimes called the cities. There are seven such planes each with its seven provinces and one additional above. Usually we hear of a hundred cities, the double number perhaps representing the downward gaze in each of the Soul upon Nature and the upward aspiration of Nature to the Soul.

The Twenty-Fourth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN TO THE DELIVERER AND PROTECTOR

[The Rishi invokes the Divine Will for protection from evil and for the fullness of the divine light and substance.]

अग्ने त्वं नो अन्तम उत त्राता शिवो भवा वरूथ्यः ।
वसुरग्निर्वसुश्रवा अच्छा नक्षि द्युमत्तमं रयिं दाः ॥१॥ २॥

1-2. O Will, become our inmost inmate, become auspicious to us, become our deliverer and our armour of protection. Thou who art the lord of substance and who of that substance hast the divine knowledge, come towards us, give us its most luminous opulence.

स नो बोधि श्रुधी हवमुरुष्या णो अघायतः समस्मात् ।
तं त्वा शोचिष्ठ दीदिवः सुम्नाय नूनमीमहे सखिभ्यः ॥३॥ ४॥

3-4. Awake! hear our call! keep us far from all that seeks to turn us to evil. O shining One, O flame of purest Light, thee for our comrades we desire that even now they may have the bliss and peace.

The Twenty-Fifth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN TO THE LORD OF LIGHT AND CREATOR OF GODHEAD

[The Rishi hymns Agni as the Seer-Will whose whole being is the light and the truth and the lavishing of the substance of divinity. He is the son born to the thought of the seers and he gives himself as the godhead born in man who is the son of our works opulent with the divine Truth and the divine Power and as the conquering steed of the journey and the battle. The whole movement of the Seer-Will is upward to the light and vastness of the superconscient; his voice is as if the thunder-chant of those heavens. He shall carry us by his perfect working beyond the siege of darkness and limitation.]

अच्छा वो अग्निमवसे देवं गासि स नो वसुः ।
रासत् पुत्र ऋषूणामृतावा पर्षति द्विषः ॥१॥

1. Raise thy song towards the Will, towards the divine for thy increasing, for he is our lord of substance and he lavishes; he is the son of the seekers of knowledge; he is the keeper of the Truth who ferries us beyond the surge of our destroyers.

स हि सत्यो यं पूर्वे चिद् देवासश्चिद्यमीधिरे ।
होतारं मन्द्रजिह्वमित् सुदीतिभिर्विभावसुम् ॥२॥

2. This is the true in his being whom the seers of old kindled, yea, the gods too kindled him with perfect outshinings into his wide substance of the light, the priest of the oblation with his tongue of ecstasy.

स नो धीती वरिष्ठया श्रेष्ठया च सुमत्या ।
अग्ने रायो दिदीहि नः सुवृक्तिभिर्वरेण्य ॥ ३॥

3. O Flame supremely desirable, so by our supreme thinking, by our brightest perfected mentality, by its utter cleaving away of all evil let thy light give unto us the bliss.

अग्निर्देवेषु राजत्यग्निर्मर्तेष्वाविशन् ।
अग्निर्नो हव्यवाहनोऽग्निं धीभिः सपर्यत ॥ ४॥

4. The Will is that which shines out in the gods, the Will is that which enters with its light into mortals, the Will is the carrier of our oblation; the Will seek and serve in all your thoughts.

अग्निस्तुविश्रवस्तमं तुविब्रह्माणमुत्तमम् ।
अतूर्तं श्रावयत्पतिं पुत्रं ददाति दाशुषे ॥ ५॥

5. The Will gives to the giver of sacrifice the Son[1] born of his works who teems with the many inspirations and the many voices of the soul, the highest, the unassailable, the Master of things who opens our ears to the knowledge.

अग्निर्ददाति सत्पतिं सासाह यो युधा नृभिः ।
अग्निरत्यं रघुष्यदं जेतारमपराजितम् ॥ ६॥

6. Yea, 'tis the Will gives to us the Lord of existences who conquers in the battle by his souls of power; Will gives to us our swift-galloping steed of battle ever conquering, never conquered.

यद् वाहिष्ठं तदग्नये बृहदर्च विभावसो ।
महिषीव त्वद् रयिस्त्वद् वाजा उदीरते ॥ ७॥

[1] The Son of the sacrifice is a constant image in the Veda. Here it is the godhead himself, Agni who gives himself as a son to man, a Son who delivers his father. Agni is also the War-Horse and the steed of the journey, the White Horse, the mystic galloping Dadhikravan who carries us through the battle to the goal of our voyaging.

7. That which is strongest in us to upbear, we give it to the Will. Sing out the Vast, O thou whose wide substance is its light. Thy opulence is as if the largeness of the Goddess[2] herself; upward is the rush of thy plenitudes.

तव द्युमन्तो अर्चयो ग्रावेवोच्यते बृहत् ।
उतो ते तन्यतुर्यथा स्वानो अर्त त्मना दिवः ॥ ८ ॥

8. Luminous are thy flaming radiances; there rises from thee a vast utterance like the voice of the pressing-stone of delight; yea, thy cry of itself rises up like a thunder-chant from the heavens.

एवाँ अग्निं वसूयवः सहसानं ववन्दिम ।
स नो विश्वा अति द्विषः पर्षन्नावेव सुक्रतुः ॥ ९ ॥

9. Thus, desiring substance, we adore the Will who is forceful to conquer. May he who has the perfect power of his workings, carry us beyond all the forces that seek to destroy us, like a ship over the waters.

[2] Aditi, the vast Mother.

The Twenty-Sixth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE PRIEST AND SACRIFICIAL FLAME

[The Rishi invokes the Divine Flame in all its usual attributes as the sacrificer, the luminous seer who has the vision of the luminous world, the bringer of the gods, the carrier of the offering, the envoy, conqueror, increaser of the divine workings in man, the knower of the Births, the leader of the march of the sacrifice with its progressive epiphany of the godheads.]

अग्ने पावक रोचिषा मन्द्रया देव जिह्वया ।
आ देवान् वक्षि यक्षि च ॥ १॥

1. O Flame, O purifier, bring to us by thy tongue of rapture, O god, the gods and offer to them sacrifice.

तं त्वा घृतस्नवीमहे चित्रभानो स्वर्दृशम् ।
देवाँ आ वीतये वह ॥ २॥

2. Thou who drippest the clarity, thou of the rich and varied luminousness, we desire thee because thou hast the vision of our world of the Truth. Bring to us the gods for their manifesting.[1]

वीतिहोत्रं त्वा कवे द्युमन्तं समिधीमहि ।
अग्ने बृहन्तमध्वरे ॥ ३॥

3. O Seer, we kindle thee in thy light and thy vastness in the march of our sacrifice who carriest the offerings on their journey.

[1] Or "for the journeying" to the luminous world of the Truth, or "for the eating" of the oblations.

अग्ने विश्वेभिरा गहि देवेभिर्हव्यदातये ।
होतारं त्वा वृणीमहे ॥ ४ ॥

4. Come, O Will, with all the godheads for the giving of the oblation; thee we accept as the priest of the offering.

यजमानाय सुन्वत आग्ने सुवीर्यं वह ।
देवैरा सत्सि बर्हिषि ॥ ५ ॥

5. For the sacrificer who presses the wine of his delight, bring, O Flame, a perfect energy. Sit with the gods on the seat of the soul's fullness.

समिधानः सहस्रजिदग्ने धर्माणि पुष्यसि ।
देवानाँ दूत उक्थ्यः ॥ ६ ॥

6. O Flame, thou burnest high and increasest the divine laws and art the conqueror of a thousandfold riches; thou art the messenger of the gods who hast the word.

न्यग्निं जातवेदसं होत्रवाहं यविष्ठ्यम् ।
दधाता देवमृत्विजम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. Set within you the Flame who knows the births, bearer of the offering, youngest vigour, divine sacrificer in the seasons of the Truth.

प्र यज्ञ एत्वानुषगद्या देवव्यचस्तमः ।
स्तृणीत बर्हिरासदे ॥ ८ ॥

8. Today let thy sacrifice march forward unceasingly, thy sacrifice that shall bring the whole epiphany of the godheads. Strew the seat of thy soul that there they may sit.

एदं मरुतो अश्विना मित्रः सीदन्तु वरुणः ।
देवासः सर्वया विशा ॥ ९ ॥

9. There let the Life-powers[2] take their seat and the Riders of the Horse[3] and the Lord of Love[4] and the Lord of Wideness,[5] even the gods with all their nation.

[2] The Maruts.
[3] The twin Ashwins.
[4] Mitra.
[5] Varuna.

The Twenty-Seventh Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE STRENGTH AND ILLUMINATION

[The Rishi under the figure of the demigod, Traivrishna Tryaruna Trasadasyu, and the seer Ashwamedha, symbolises the fulfilment in the human mentality of the illumination of the God-Mind Indra, and the power of the God-Will, Agni, in the vitality. The Mind-Soul, destroyer of the demons, awakened to knowledge as the human-born Indra, has given to the seer his two cows of light that draw his wain, his two shining horses that draw his chariot and the ten times twelve cows of the dawn of knowledge. He has assented to and confirmed the desire with which the Life-Soul has given the sacrifice of the Life-Horse to the gods. The Rishi prays that this Mind-Soul, lord of the triple dawn, may give to the journeying Life that seeks the truth, the mental intelligence and power of possession needed and may itself in return receive from Agni the peace and bliss. The Life-Soul on the other hand has given the hundred powers, the vital strength needed for the upward journey; the Rishi prays that this Life-Soul may attain to that vast strength which is the power of the Sun of Truth on the superconscient plane.]

अनस्वन्ता सत्पतिर्मामहे मे गावा चेतिष्ठो असुरो मघोनः ।
त्रैवृष्णो अग्ने दशभिः सहस्रैर्वैश्वानर त्र्यरुणश्चिकेत ॥१॥

1. O Will, O Universal Power,[1] the mighty One supreme in vision, master of his being, lord of his plenitudes has given me his two cows of the Light that draw his wain. He of

[1] Or, Godhead.

the triple dawn, son of the triple Bull,[2] has awakened to knowledge with the ten thousands[3] of his plenitude.

यो मे शता च विंशतिं च गोनां हरी च युक्ता सुधुरा ददाति ।
वैश्वानर सुष्टुतो वावृधानोऽग्ने यच्छ त्र्यरुणाय शर्म ॥ २॥

2. He gives to me the hundred and twenty[4] of the cows of dawn; his two shining[5] horses he gives, yoked to the car, that bear aright the yoke. O Will, O Universal Power, do thou rightly affirmed and increasing extend peace and bliss to the lord of the triple dawn.

एवा ते अग्ने सुमतिं चकानो नविष्ठाय नवमं त्रसदस्युः ।
यो मे गिरस्तुविजातस्य पूर्वीर्युक्तेनाभि त्र्यरुणो गृणाति ॥ ३॥

3. For thus has he done desiring thy grace of mind, new-given for him new-manifested, — he, the disperser of the destroyers,[6] the lord of the triple dawn who with attentive mind gives response to the many words of my many births.[7]

[2] The Triple Bull is Indra, lord of the three luminous realms of Swar, the Divine Mind; Tryaruna Trasadasyu is the half-god, man turned into the Indra type; therefore he is described by all the usual epithets of Indra, "Asura", "Satpati", "Maghavan". The triple dawn is the dawn of these three realms on the human mentality.

[3] Thousand symbolises absolute completeness, but there are ten subtle powers of the illumined mind each of which has to have its entire plenitude.

[4] The symbolic figure of the illuminations of divine knowledge as the series of dawns (cows) of the twelve months of the year and twelve periods of the sacrifice. There are again ten times twelve to correspond to the ten subtle sisters, powers of the illumined mentality.

[5] The two shining horses of Indra identical probably with the two cows of light of the first verse; they are the two vision-powers of the supramental Truth-consciousness, right-hand and left-hand, probably direct truth-discernment and intuition. As cows symbolising light of knowledge they yoke themselves to the material mind, the wain; as horses symbolising power of knowledge to the chariot of Indra, the liberated pure mind.

[6] Trasadasyu; in all things he reproduces the characteristics of Indra.

[7] The seer by this self-fulfilment on the higher plane is born, as it were, into many realms of consciousness and from each of these there go up its words that express the impulses in it which seek a divine fulfilment. The Mind-Soul answers to these and gives assent, it supplies to the word of expression the answering word of illumination and to the Life that seeks the Truth it gives the power of intelligence that finds and holds the Truth.

यो म इति प्रवोचत्यश्वमेधाय सूरये ।
ददद‍ृचा सनिं यते ददन्मेधामृतायते ॥ ४॥

4. May he who answers to me with assent give to the illumined giver of the Horse-sacrifice,[8] by the word of illumination possession of the goal of his journey; may he give power of intelligence to the seeker of the Truth.

यस्य मा परुषाः शतमुद्धर्षयन्त्युक्षणः ।
अश्वमेधस्य दानाः सोमा इव त्र्याशिरः ॥ ५॥

5. A hundred strong bulls of the diffusion[9] raise me up to joy; the gifts of the sacrificer of the steed are as outpourings of the wine of delight with their triple infusions.[10]

इन्द्राग्नी शतदाव्न्यश्वमेधे सुवीर्यम् ।
क्षत्रं धारयतं बृहद् दिवि सूर्यमिवाजरम् ॥ ६॥

6. May the God-Mind and the God-Will uphold in the sacrificer of the Horse and giver of his hundred a perfect energy and a vast force of battle even as in heaven the Sun of Light indestructible.[11]

[8] The Horse-sacrifice is the offering of the Life-power with all its impulses, desires, enjoyments to the divine existence. The Life-soul (Dwita) is itself the giver of this sacrifice which it performs when by the power of Agni it attains to vision on its own vital plane, when it becomes, in the figure of the hymn, the illumined seer Ashwamedha.

[9] The complete hundred powers of the Life by whom all the abundance of the vital plane is showered upon the growing man. The vital forces being the instrument of desire and enjoyment, this diffusion is like the outpouring of the wine of delight that raises the soul to new and intoxicating joys.

[10] The delight extracted from existence is typified by the honey wine of the Soma; it is mixed with the milk, the curds and the grain, the milk being that of the luminous cows, the curds the fixation of their yield in the intellectual mind and the grain the formulation of the light in the force of the physical mind. These symbolic senses are indicated by the double meaning of the words used, *go*, *dadhi* and *yava*.

[11] Perfect and vast energy in the vital being corresponding to the infinite and immortal light of the Truth in the mental being.

The Twenty-Eighth Hymn to Agni

A HYMN OF THE HIGH-BLAZING FLAME, KING OF IMMORTALITY

[The Rishi celebrates the flame of the Will high-blazing in the dawn of knowledge as the King of Immortality, the giver to the soul of its spiritual riches and felicity and of a well-governed mastery of Nature. He is the bearer of our oblation, the illumined guide of our sacrifice to its divine and universal goal.]

समिद्धो अग्निर्दिवि शोचिरश्रेत् प्रत्यङ्ङुषसमुर्विया वि भाति ।
एति प्राची विश्ववारा नमोभिर्देवाँ ईळाना हविषा घृताची ॥१॥

1. The Flame of Will burning high rises to his pure light in the heaven of mind; wide he extends his illumination and fronts the Dawn. She comes, moving upward, laden with all desirable things, seeking the gods with the oblation, luminous with the clarity.

समिध्यमानो अमृतस्य राजसि हविष्कृण्वन्तं सचसे स्वस्तये ।
विश्वं स धत्ते द्रविणं यमिन्वस्यातिथ्यमग्ने नि च धत्त इत् पुरः ॥२॥

2. When thou burnest high thou art king of immortality and thou cleavest to the doer of sacrifice to give him that blissful state; he to whom thou comest to be his guest, holds in himself all substance and he sets thee within in his front.

अग्ने शर्ध महते सौभगाय तव द्युम्नान्युत्तमानि सन्तु ।
सं जास्पत्यं सुयममा कृणुष्व शत्रूयतामभि तिष्ठा महांसि ॥३॥

3. O Flame, put forth thy battling might for a vast enjoyment[1] of bliss, may there be thy highest illumination; create a well-governed union of the Lord and his Spouse, set thy foot on the greatness of hostile powers.

समिद्धस्य प्रमहसोऽग्ने वन्दे तव श्रियम् ।
वृषभो द्युम्नवाँ असि समध्वरेष्विध्यसे ॥ ४॥

4. I adore, O Flame, the glory of thy high-blazing mightiness. Thou art the Bull with the illuminations; thou burnest up in the march of our sacrifices.

समिद्धो अग्न आहुत देवान् यक्षि स्वध्वर ।
त्वं हि हव्यवाळसि ॥ ५॥

5. O Flame that receivest our offerings, perfect guide of the sacrifice, high-kindled offer our oblation to the godheads; for thou art the bearer of our offerings.

आ जुहोता दुवस्यताऽग्निं प्रयत्यध्वरे ।
वृणीध्वं हव्यवाहनम् ॥ ६॥

6. Cast the offering, serve the Will with your works[2] while your sacrifice moves forward to its goal, accept the carrier of our oblation.[3]

[1] The Vedic immortality is a vast beatitude, a large enjoyment of the divine and infinite existence reposing on a perfect union between the Soul and Nature; the soul becomes King of itself and its environment, conscious on all its planes, master of them, with Nature for its bride delivered from divisions and discords into an infinite and luminous harmony.

[2] Or, set the Will to its workings.

[3] This hymn closes the series addressed to Agni and forming the first twenty-eight hymns of the fifth Mandala of the Rig Veda.

Hymns to the Lords of Light

The Guardians of the Light

SURYA, LIGHT AND SEER

THE RIG VEDA rises out of the ancient Dawn with the sound of a thousand-voiced hymn lifted from the soul of man to an all-creative Truth and an all-illumining Light. Truth and Light are synonymous or equivalent words in the thought of the Vedic seers even as are their opposites, Darkness and Ignorance. The battle of the Vedic Gods and Titans is a perpetual conflict between Day and Night for the possession of the triple world of heaven, mid-air and earth and for the liberation or bondage of the mind, life and body of the human being, his mortality or his immortality. It is waged by the Powers of a supreme Truth and Lords of a supreme Light against other dark Powers who struggle to maintain the foundation of this falsehood in which we dwell and the iron walls of these hundred fortified cities of the Ignorance.

This antinomy between the Light and the Darkness, the Truth and the Falsehood has its roots in an original cosmic antinomy between the illumined Infinite and the darkened finite consciousness. Aditi the infinite, the undivided is the mother of the Gods, Diti or Danu, the division, the separative consciousness the mother of the Titans; therefore the gods in man move towards light, infinity and unity, the Titans dwell in their cave of the darkness and issue from it only to break up, make discordant, wounded, limited his knowledge, will, strength, joy and being. Aditi is originally the pure consciousness of infinite existence one and self-luminous; she is the Light that is Mother of all things. As the infinite she gives birth to Daksha, the discriminating and distributing Thought of the divine Mind, and is herself born to Daksha as the cosmic infinite, the mystic Cow whose udders feed all the worlds.

It is this divine daughter of Daksha who is the mother of the gods. In the cosmos Aditi is the undivided infinite unity of things, free from the duality, *advaya*, and has Diti the separative dualising consciousness for the obverse side of her cosmic creation, — her sister and a rival wife in the later myth. Here in the lower being where she is manifested as the earth-principle, her husband is the lower or inauspicious Father who is slain by their child Indra, the power of the divine Mind manifested in the inferior creation. Indra, says the hymn, slays his father, dragging him by the feet, and makes his mother a widow. In another image, forcible and expressive though repugnant to the decorousness of our modern taste, Surya is said to be the lover of his sister Dawn and the second husband of his mother Aditi, and by a variation of the same image Aditi is hymned as the wife of the all-pervading Vishnu who is in the cosmic creation one of the sons of Aditi and the younger brother of Indra. These images which seem gross and confused when we lack the key to their mystic significance, become clear enough the moment that is recovered. Aditi is the infinite consciousness in the cosmos espoused and held by the lower creative power which works through the limited mind and body, but delivered from this subjection by the force of the divine or illumined Mind born of her in the mentality of man. It is this Indra who makes Surya the light of the Truth rise in heaven and dispel the darknesses and falsehoods and limited vision of the separative mentality. Vishnu is the vaster all-pervading existence which then takes possession of our liberated and unified consciousness, but he is born in us only after Indra has made his puissant and luminous appearance.

This Truth is the light, the body of Surya. It is described as the True, the Right, the Vast; as the luminous supramental heaven of Swar — "vast Swar, the great Truth" — concealed beyond our heaven and our earth; and as Surya, the Sun, "that Truth" which dwells lost in the darkness, withheld from us in the secret cave of the subconscient. This hidden Truth is the Vast because it dwells free and manifest only on the supramental plane where existence, will, knowledge, joy move in a rapturous

and boundless infinity and are not limited and hedged as in this many-walled existence of the mind, life and body which form the lower being. That is the wideness of the higher being to which we have to ascend breaking beyond the two enclosing firmaments of the mental and physical; it is described as a divine existence free and large in its unbounded range; it is a wideness where there is no obstacle nor any siege of limitation; it is the fear-free pasture of the luminous herds of the Sun; it is the seat and house of the Truth, the own home of the Gods, the solar world, the true light where there is no fear for the soul, no possibility of any wound to the large and equal bliss of its existence.

This supramental vastness is also the fundamental truth of being, *satyam*, out of which its active truth wells out naturally and without strife of effort into a perfect and faultless movement because there is upon those heights no division, no gulf between consciousness and force, no divorce of knowledge and will, no disharmonising of our being and its action; everything there is the "straight" and there is no least possibility of crookedness. Therefore this supramental plane of vastness and true being is also Ritam, the true activity of things; it is a supreme truth of movement, action, manifestation, an infallible truth of will and heart and knowledge, a perfect truth of thought and word and emotion; it is the spontaneous Right, the free Law, the original divine order of things untouched by the falsehoods of the divided and separative consciousness. It is the vast divine and self-luminous synthesis born of a fundamental unity, of which our petty existence is only the poor, partial, broken and perverted cutting up and analysis. Such was the Sun of the Vedic worship, the paradise of light to which the Fathers aspired, the world, the body of Surya son of Aditi.

Aditi is the infinite Light of which the divine world is a formation and the gods, children of the infinite Light, born of her in the Ritam, manifested in that active truth of her movement guard it against Chaos and Ignorance. It is they who maintain the invincible workings of the Truth in the universe, they who build its worlds into an image of the Truth. They, bounteous givers, loose out upon man its floods variously imaged by the mystic poets

as the sevenfold solar waters, the rain of heaven, the streams of the Truth, the seven mighty Ones of heaven, the waters that have knowledge, the floods that breaking through the control of Vritra the Coverer ascend and overflow the mind. They, seers and revealers, make the light of the Truth to arise on the darkened sky of his mentality, fill with its luminous and honey-sweet satisfactions the atmosphere of his vital existence, transform into its vastness and plenitude by the power of the Sun the earth of his physical being, create everywhere the divine Dawn.

Then are established in man the seasons of the Truth, the divine workings, called sometimes the Aryan workings; the law of the Truth seizes and guides his action, the word of the Truth is heard in his thought. Then appear the straight undeviating paths of the Truth, the road and ford of Heaven, the way of going of the gods and of the fathers; for by this path where no violence is done to the divine workings, straight, thornless, happy, easy to tread once our feet are set upon it and the manifested divinities are our guard, the luminous fathers ascended by the power of the Word, by the power of the Wine, by the power of the Sacrifice into the fearless light and stood upon the wide and open levels of the supramental existence. So must man, their posterity, exchange the crooked movements of the separative consciousness for the straight things of the truth-conscious mind.

For always the courses of the Sun, the gallopings of the divine horse Dadhikravan, the movement of the chariot-wheels of the gods travel on the straight path over wide and level ranges where all is open and the vision is not confined; but the ways of the lower being are crooked windings beset with pits and stumbling-blocks and they crawl unvisited by the divine impulsion over a rugged and uneven ground which screens in from men their goal, their road, their possible helpers, the dangers that await them, their ambushed enemies. Travelling on the path of the Truth with the straight and perfect leading of the gods the limitations of mind and body are at length transcended; we take possession of the three luminous worlds of the higher heaven, enjoy the beatific immortality, grow into the epiphany of the gods and build in our human existence the universal formations

of the higher or divine creation. Man then possesses both the divine and the human birth; he is lord of the double movement, he holds Aditi and Diti together, realises the universal in the individual, becomes the Infinite in the finite.

It is this conception that Surya embodies. He is the light of the Truth rising on the human consciousness in the wake of the divine Dawn whom he pursues as a lover follows after his beloved and he treads the paths she has traced for him. For Dawn the daughter of Heaven, the face or power of Aditi, is the constant opening out of the divine light upon the human being; she is the coming of the spiritual riches, a light, a power, a new birth, the pouring out of the golden treasure of heaven into his earthly existence. Surya means the illumined or the luminous, as also the illumined thinker is called *sūri*; but the root means, besides, to create or, more literally, to loose, release, speed forth, — for in the Indian idea creation is a loosing forth of what is held back, a manifestation of what is hidden in the infinite Existence. Luminous vision and luminous creation are the two functions of Surya. He is Surya the creator and he is Surya the revealing vision, the all-seer.

What does he create? First the worlds; for everything is created out of the burning light and truth of the infinite Being, loosed out of the body of Surya who is the light of His infinite self-vision, formed by Agni, the seer-will, the omniscient creative force and flaming omnipotence of that self-vision. Secondly, into the night of man's darkened consciousness this Father of things, this Seer of the truth manifests out of himself in place of the inauspicious and inferior creation, which he then looses away from us, the illimitable harmony of the divine worlds governed by the self-conscious supramental Truth and the living law of the manifested godhead. Still, the name Surya is seldom used when there is question of this creation; it is reserved for his passive aspects as the body of the infinite Light and the revelation. In his active power he is addressed by other names; then he is Savitri, from the same root as Surya, the Creator; or he is Twashtri the Fashioner of things; or he is Pushan, the Increaser, — appellations that are sometimes used as if identical with Surya,

sometimes as if expressing other forms and even other personalities of this universal godhead. Savitri, again, manifests himself, especially in the formation of the Truth in man, through four great and active deities Mitra, Varuna, Bhaga and Aryaman, the Lords of pure Wideness, luminous Harmony, divine Enjoyment, exalted Power.

But if Surya is the creator, he who is, as the Veda says, the self of all that moves and all that is stable, and if this Surya is also the divine, "the wide-burning Truth that is lodged in the law which upholds heaven", then all the worlds should manifest that law of the Truth and all of them should be so many heavens. Whence then comes this falsehood, sin, death, suffering of our mortal existence? We are told that there are eight sons of the cosmic Aditi who are born from her body; by seven she moves to the gods, but the eighth son is Martanda, of the mortal creation, whom she casts away from her; with the seven she moves to the supreme life, the original age of the gods, but Martanda is brought back out of the Inconscient into which he had been cast to preside over mortal birth and death.

This Martanda or eighth Surya is the black or dark, the lost, the hidden sun. The Titans have taken and concealed him in their cavern of darkness and thence he must be released into splendour and freedom by the gods and seers through the power of the sacrifice. In less figurative language the mortal life is governed by an oppressed, a hidden, a disguised Truth; just as Agni the divine seer-will works at first upon earth concealed or obscured by the smoke of human passion and self-will, so Surya the divine Knowledge lies concealed and unattainable in the night and darkness, is enveloped and contained in the ignorance and error of the ordinary human existence. The Seers by the power of truth in their thoughts discover this Sun lying in the darkness, they liberate this knowledge, this power of undivided and all-embracing vision, this eye of the gods concealed in our subconscient being; they release his radiances, they create the divine Dawn. Indra the divine Mind-power, Agni the Seer-Will, Brihaspati the Master of the inspired word, Soma the immortal Delight born in man aid them to shatter the strong places of the

mountain, the artificial obstructions of the Titans are broken and this Sun soars up radiant into our heavens. Arisen he mounts to the supramental Truth. "He goes where the gods have made a path for him cleaving like an eagle to his goal"; he ascends with his seven shining horses to the utter luminous ocean of the higher existence; he is led over it by the seers as in a ship. Surya, the Sun, is himself perhaps the golden ship in which Pushan the Increaser leads men beyond evil and darkness and sin to the Truth and the Immortality.

This is the first aspect of Surya that he is the supreme Light of the truth attained by the human being after his liberation from the Ignorance. "Beholding a higher Light beyond this darkness we have followed it and reached the highest Light of all, Surya divine in the divine Being." This is the Vedic way of putting the idea which we find more openly expressed in the Upanishads, the fairest form of Surya in which man sees everywhere the one Purusha with the liberated vision "He am I." The higher light of Surya is that by which vision rises on our darkness and moves towards the superconscient, the highest that other greater Truth-vision which, having attained, moves in the farthest supreme world of the Infinite.

This brilliant Surya is made by the godward will of man; he is perfectly fashioned by the doers of divine works. For this light is the vision of the highest to which man arrives by the Yajna or Yoga of his being, by its union through a long labour of self-uplifting and self-giving to the powers of the concealed Truth. "O Sun, thou all-seeing Intelligence," cries the Rishi, "may we, living creatures, behold thee bringing to us the great Light, blazing out on us for vision upon vision of the beatitude, ascending to the bliss in the vast mass of thy strength above!" The Life-powers in us, the purifying storm-gods who battle for the knowledge, they who are created by the divine Mind Indra and taught by Varuna who is the divine Purity and Wideness, are to attain to their enjoyment by the light of this Surya.

The light of Surya is the form, the body of that divine vision. He is described as the pure and visioned force of the Truth which shines out in his rising like the gold of Heaven. He is the great

godhead who is the vision of Mitra and Varuna; he is the large and invincible eye of that Wideness and that Harmony; the eye of Mitra and Varuna is the great ocean of vision of Surya. His is that large truth-vision which makes us give to its possessors the name of seer. Himself the "wide-seeing", "the Sun, the Seer who knows the triple knowledge of these gods and their more eternal births", he sees all that is in the gods and all that is in men; "beholding the straight things and the crooked in mortals he looks down upon their movements." It is by this eye of light that Indra, who has made him arise in heaven for far vision, distinguishes the Aryan powers from the Dasyu, separating the children of light from the children of darkness so that he may destroy these but raise those to their perfection.

But seerhood brings with it not only the far vision but the far hearing. As the eyes of the sage are opened to the light, so is his ear unsealed to receive the vibrations of the Infinite; from all the regions of the Truth there comes thrilling into him its Word which becomes the form of his thoughts. It is when "the thought rises from the seat of the Truth" that Surya by his rays releases into the wideness the mystic Cow of Light. Surya himself is not only "the son of Heaven who is the far-seeing eye of knowledge born of the gods", but he is the speaker also of the supreme word and the impeller of the illumined and illuminating thought. "The truth that thou rising free from sin, O Sun, speakest today to Mitra and Varuna, that may we speak and abide in the Godhead dear to thee, O Aditi, and thee, O Aryaman." And in the Gayatri, the chosen formula of the ancient Vedic religion, the supreme light of the godhead Surya Savitri is invoked as the object of our desire, the deity who shall give his luminous impulsion to all our thoughts.

Surya Savitri, the Creator; for the seer and the creator meet again in this apotheosis of the divine vision in man. The victory of that vision, the arising of this Light to "its own home of the truth", the outflooding of this great ocean of vision of Surya which is the eye of the infinite Wideness and the infinite Harmony, is in fact nothing else than the second or divine creation. For then Surya in us beholds with a comprehensive vision all the

worlds, all the births as herds of the divine Light, bodies of the infinite Aditi; and this new-seeing of all things, this new-moulding of thought, act, feeling, will, consciousness in the terms of the Truth, the Bliss, the Right, the Infinity is a new creation. It is the coming into us of "that greater existence which is beyond on the other side of this smaller and which, even if it be also a dream of the Infinite, puts away from it the falsehood."

To prepare that new birth and new creation for man by his illumination and upward voyaging is the function of Surya, the divine Light and Seer.

THE DIVINE DAWN

As the Sun is image and godhead of the golden Light of the divine Truth, so Dawn is image and godhead of the opening out of the supreme illumination on the night of our human ignorance. Dawn daughter of Heaven and Night her sister are obverse and reverse sides of the same eternal Infinite. Utter Night out of which the worlds arise is the symbol of the Inconscient. That is the inconscient Ocean, that the darkness concealed within darkness out of which the One is born by the greatness of His energy. But in the world of our darkened mortal view of things there reigns the lesser Night of the Ignorance which envelops heaven and earth and the mid-region, our mental and physical consciousness and our vital being. It is here that Dawn the daughter of Heaven rises with the radiances of her Truth, with the bliss of her boons; putting off the darkness like a black woven robe, as a young maiden garbed in light, this bride of the luminous Lord of beatitude unveils the splendours of her bosom, reveals her shining limbs and makes the Sun ascend upon the upclimbing tier of the worlds.

This night of our darkness is not entirely unillumined. If there be nothing else, if all is deep gloom, yet the divine flame of the seer-will Agni burns through the dense murk giving light to him who sits afar in its shadow; though not yet kindled, as it shall be at dawn, on a sacrificial altar, yet even so it fulfils on our earth as the lowest and greatest of the gods the will and

works of the hidden Light in spite of all this enveloping smoke of passion and desire. And the stars shine out and the moon comes at night making manifest the invincible workings of the infinite King. Moreover, always Night holds hidden in her bosom her luminous sister; this life of our ignorance taught by the gods in their veiled human working prepares the birth of the divine Dawn so that, sped forth, she may manifest the supreme creation of the luminous Creator. For the divine Dawn is the force or face of Aditi; she is the mother of the gods; she gives them birth into our humanity in their true forms no longer compressed into our littleness and veiled to our vision.

But this great work is to be done according to the ordered gradations of the Truth, in its fixed seasons, by the twelve months of the sacrifice, by the divine years of Surya Savitri. Therefore there is a constant rhythm and alternation of night and dawn, illuminations of the Light and periods of exile from it, openings up of our darkness and its settling upon us once more, till the celestial Birth is accomplished and again till it is fulfilled in its greatness, knowledge, love and power. These later nights are other than those utter darknesses which are dreaded as the occasion of the enemy, the haunt of the demons of division who devour; these are rather the pleasant nights, the divine and blessed ones who equally labour for our growth. Night and Dawn are then of different forms but one mind and suckle alternately the same luminous Child. Then the revealing lustres of the brighter goddess are known in the pleasant nights even through the movements of the darkness. Therefore Kutsa hymns the two sisters, "Immortal, with a common lover, agreeing, they move over heaven and earth forming the hue of the Light; common is the path of the sisters, infinite; and they range it, the one and the other, taught by the gods; common they, though different their forms." For one is the bright Mother of the herds, the other the dark Cow, the black Infinite, who can yet be made to yield us the shining milk of heaven.

Thus the Dawns come with a constant alternation, thrice ten — the mystic number of our mentality — making the month, till some day there shall break out upon us the wondrous experience

of our forefathers in a long bygone age of humanity when the dawns succeeded each other without the intervention of any night, when they came to the Sun as to a lover and circled round him, not returning again and again in his front as a precursor of his periodical visitations. That shall be when the supramental consciousness shines out fulfilled in the mentality and we shall possess the year-long day enjoyed by the gods on the summit of the eternal mountain. Then shall be the dawning of the "best" or highest, most glorious Dawn, when "driving away the Enemy, guardian of the Truth, born in the Truth, full of the bliss, uttering the highest truths, fulfilled in all boons she brings the birth and manifestation of the godheads." Meanwhile each dawn comes as the first of a long succession that shall follow and pursues the path and goal of those that have already gone forward; each in her coming impels the life upwards and awakens in us "someone who was dead". "Mother of the gods, force of the Infinite, the vast vision that awakes from the sacrifice she creates expression for the thought of the soul" and gives us the universal birth in all that is born.

The Vedic Rishis, inspired poets penetrated with the beauty and glory of physical Nature, could not fail to make the most of the figures given to them by this splendid and attractive symbol of the earthly dawning, so that if we read carelessly or with too much attachment to the poetical figure we may miss or repel their deeper meaning. But in no hymn to their beautiful goddess do they forget to give us shining hints, illuminating epithets, profound mystical phrases which shall recall us to the divine sense of the symbol. Especially do they use that figure of the rays that are herds of shining cows around which they have woven the mystic parable of the Angiras Rishis. Dawn is invoked to shine out on us as when she shone upon the seven-mouthed Angiras, on the unity of the nine-rayed and the ten-rayed seers who by the utter thought of the soul, by the word that illumines broke open the fortified pens, "pens of the darkness" in which the Panis, misers and traffickers of the Night, had shut up the Sun's radiant herds. Her rays are as loosings forth of these shining ones; the Dawns themselves are as if the

released upward movements of those herded illuminations. Pure and purifying, they break open the doors of the pen. Dawn is the truth-possessing mother of the herds; she is herself the shining Cow and her milk is the divine yield of heaven, the luminous milk which is mixed with the wine of the gods.

This Dawn illumines not only our earth but all the worlds. She brings out into expression the successive planes of our existence so that we may look upon all "the diverse lives" of which we are capable. She reveals them by the eye of the Sun and fronting "the worlds of the becoming she stands aloft over them all as the vision of immortality." She is herself that which shines out widely as the Eye, and like her lover the Sun she gives not only the vision, but also the word; "she finds speech for every thinker," she creates expression for the thought in the soul. To those who saw only a little she gives wide vision and brings out into expression for them all the worlds. For she is a godhead of thought, the "young and ancient goddess of many thoughts who moves according to the divine law." She is the goddess of the perceptive knowledge who has the perfect truth; she is the supreme light of all lights and is born as a varied and all-embracing conscient vision. She is the light full of knowledge which rises up out of the darkness. "We have crossed through to the other shore of this darkness," cries the Rishi, "Dawn is breaking forth and she creates and forms the births of knowledge."

Constantly the idea of the Truth is associated with this luminous goddess Usha. She awakens full of the Truth by the illuminations of heaven; she comes uttering words of truth; her dawns are luminous in their entering in because they are true as being born from the Truth; it is from the seat of the Truth that the dawns awake. She is the shining leader of perfect truths who awakens in perception to things of varied light and opens all doors. Agni, the mighty one, enters into a great wideness of our heaven and earth receiving his impulsion in the foundation of the Truth which is the foundation of the Dawns; for the outshining of this Dawn is "the vast knowledge of Mitra and Varuna and like a thing of delight it orders the light everywhere in many forms."

Moreover she gives the riches we seek and leads man on the divine path. She is the queen of all boons and the wealth she gives, expressed in the mystic symbols of the Cow and the Horse, is the bright abundance of the higher planes; Agni begs from her and attains in her luminous coming their delightful substance; she gives to the mortal inspired knowledge and plenitude and impelling force and vast energy. It is she who creates the Path for mortals by her light; she makes for them the good paths that are happy and easy of going. She moves man to his journey; "Thou" says the Rishi "art there for strength and knowledge and great impulsion, thou art our movement to the goal, thou makest us set forth on the journey." Her path is a path of light and she moves on it with horses yoked by the Truth, herself possessed of the Truth and vast by its power. She follows effectively the path of the Truth and as one that knows she destroys not its directions. "Therefore," runs the chant, "O Dawn divine, shine out on us immortal, in thy chariot of bliss, uttering the words of Truth; let horses bring thee that are well-governed, golden of hue, wide in their strength."

Like all the leaders of the Path, she is a destroyer of enemies. While the Aryan wakes in the dawn, the Panis, misers of Life and Light, sleep unawakening in the heart of the darkness where there are not her varied rays of knowledge. Like an armed hero she drives away our enemies and dispels the darkness like a charging war-horse. The daughter of heaven comes with the light driving away the enemy and all darknesses. And this Light is the light of the world of Swar, the luminous world that Surya Savitri shall create for us. For because she is divine Dawn of the luminous paths, vast with the Truth and bringing to us its bright world, therefore the illumined adore her with their thoughts. Removing, as it were, a woven robe the bride of the Lord of beatitude by her perfect works and her perfect enjoyment creates Swar and spreads wide in her glory from the ends of heaven over all the earth; she attains to a high-uplifted strength in heaven establishing the honey of the sweetness and the three luminous regions of that world are made to shine out by the delightful vision of this great Dawn.

Therefore cries the Rishi, "Arise, life and force have come to us, the darkness has departed, the Light arrives; she has made empty the path for the journey of the Sun; thither let us go where the gods shall carry forward our being beyond these limits."

PUSHAN THE INCREASER

Since the divine work in us cannot be suddenly accomplished, the godhead cannot be created all at once, but only by a luminous development and constant nurture through the succession of the dawns, through the periodic revisitings of the illumining Sun, Surya the Sun-Power manifests himself in another form as Pushan, the Increaser. The root of this name means to increase, foster, nourish. The spiritual wealth coveted by the Rishis is one that thus increases "day by day", that is, in each return of this fostering Sun; increase or growth (*puṣṭi*) is a frequent object of their prayers. Pushan represents this aspect of the Surya-power. He is the "lord and master of plenitudes, lord of our growings, our comrade". Pushan is the enricher of our sacrifice. Vast Pushan shall advance our chariot by his energy; he shall become for the increase of our plenitudes. Pushan is described as himself a stream of the divine riches and a lavish heap of its substance. He is lord of the vast treasure of its joy and companion of our felicity.

The return of the night of ignorance which intervenes between the successive dawns is imaged as the loss of the radiant herds of the Sun frequently stolen from the seer by the Panis and sometimes as the loss of the Sun itself hidden by them again in their tenebrous cavern of the subconscient. The increase which Pushan gives depends on the recovery of these disappearing illuminations of the Truth. Therefore this god is associated with Indra the Power of divine Mind, his brother, friend, ally in battle, in their forceful recovery. He perfects and accomplishes our host that seeks for the herds so that they conquer and possess. "Let Pushan pursue after our luminous herds, let Pushan guard our war-horses, let Pushan conquer for us the plenitude. O Pushan, go after our cows. . . . Let Pushan hold his right hand over us

in front; let him drive back to us that which we have lost." So also he brings back the lost Surya. "O shining Pushan, bring to us, as if our lost herd, the God of the varied fullness of flame who upholds our heavens. Pushan finds the shining King who was hidden from us and concealed in the cave." And we are told of the luminous goad which this resplendent deity bears, the goad that urges the thoughts of the soul and is the means of accomplishment of the herd of the radiant illuminations. What he gives to us is secure; for because he has the knowledge, he loses not the herd and is the guardian of the world of our becoming. He has the variously ordaining and comprehensive no less than the complete unified vision of all our worlds and therefore he is our fosterer and increaser. He is the lord of our felicity who loses not our possession of knowledge and so long as we abide in the law of his workings we shall suffer no hurt nor diminution. The happy state of the soul that he gives removes from it all sin and evil and makes today and makes tomorrow for the building up of the whole godhead in our universal being.

Since Surya is the lord of the Knowledge, Pushan also is especially the knower and thinker and guardian of the shining thoughts of the seer — the keeper of the herds delighting in the thought who is immanent in the whole world and all-pervading fosters all the forms of creative knowledge. It is this Increaser who stirs and impels the minds of the illumined and is the means of accomplishment and perfection of their thoughts; he is the seer set in man the thinker, the comrade of his illumined mind who moves him upon the path. He manifests in us the thought which wins the Cow and the Horse and all the plenitude of the wealth. He is the friend of every thinker; he cherishes the thought in its increase as a lover cherishes his bride. The thoughts that seek the supreme felicity are the forces that the Increaser yokes to his car, they are the "unborn ones"[1] who take upon them the yoke of his chariot.

[1] The word has the double meaning of goat and unborn. The words meaning sheep and goat are used with a covert sense in the Veda like that which means cow. Indra is called both the Ram and the Bull.

The image of the chariot, of the journey, of the path occurs constantly in association with Pushan because this growth which he gives is a journey towards the fullness of the Truth that lies beyond. The Path in the Veda is always the path of this Truth. Thus the Rishi prays to Pushan to become for us the charioteer of the Truth and the idea of the Vedic thought and knowledge and the idea of the Path are frequently interwoven with each other. Pushan is the lord of the Path whom we yoke as if a chariot for thought, for the winning of the plenitude; he distinguishes our paths so that the thoughts may be accomplished and perfected; he leads us on them by knowledge, forcefully teaching us, saying "thus it is and thus" so that we learn from him of the homes to which we travel; it is as the seer that he is the impeller of the horses of our chariots. Like Usha he makes for us happy paths of an easy going, — for he finds for us the will and strength, — and by his traversing of them rids us of evil. The wheel of his chariot comes not to harm, nor is there any trouble or suffering in its movement. There are indeed enemies on the way, but he shall slay these oppressors of our journey. "O Pushan, the wolf, the troubler of our bliss who teaches us evil, him smite from the Path. The adversary, the robber perverse of heart, drive him far from the road of our journeying. Set thy foot on the distressful force of whatsoever power of duality expresses evil in us."

Thus beyond all the obstacles that cling to our wheels Pushan, the divine and luminous increaser of man's soul, shall lead us to the light and bliss which Surya Savitri creates. "The Life that is the life of all shall guard thee; Pushan shall guard thee in thy forward path in front, and where the doers of the good work are seated, where they have gone, there shall the divine Savitri set thee. Pushan knoweth all the regions and he shall lead us by the way which is freest from peril. Let the giver of felicity, the blazing god who has all the energies lead steadily in our front by his knowledge. Pushan has been born in thy forward travelling on the paths through earth and through heaven; for he moves in both the worlds which are made full of delight for us; here he ranges in his knowledge and he journeys beyond."

SAVITRI THE CREATOR

The result of the procession of the shining dawns, of the divine returns of Surya, of the increasings of Pushan and his leading on the Path is summed up in the creation of Savitri the luminous Creator. It is the god Savitri who sets us there where the ancient doers of the Work have preceded us; that is the desirable flame and splendour of the divine Creator on which the seer has to meditate and towards which this god impels our thoughts, that the bliss of the creative godhead on the forms of which our soul must meditate as it journeys towards it. It is the supreme creation in which the goddess undivided and infinite speaks out her Word and the all-ruling kings Varuna, Mitra and Aryaman; to that consummation the power of all these godheads turns with a united acceptance.

That divine word is the word of the Truth; for a superconscient Truth lies concealed and is the basis of the infinite being which stands revealed on those higher altitudes of our ascension. What we now accept as life is the evil dream, the death that governs us because we live in a false knowledge, a limited and divided existence exposed to every devourer. That is not real life. For life we have to be able to look long upon the Sun; for life we have to be able to hold in our thought a knowledge and a word full of the consummate perception; we have to bring forward the Truth as an offering so that the luminous god with his golden hands full of the Light may rise high in our heavens and hear our word. We must choose and take into ourselves that supreme and vast state of this Mighty One who has the thought of the knowledge, he who creates for the gods the immortality and the highest enjoyment; we must widen out the cord of Savitri so that it shall release us into higher states of life made accessible to men and harmonised with their being. To hold that felicity we have to become free from sin and evil in the wideness and purity of Varuna, in the all-embracing harmony of Mitra, in the supreme creation of Savitri.

Then Savitri shall loose away from us, shall uncreate the suffering of the evil dream. For the seeker of the straightness

he shall create an increasing wideness of his existence so that even with our incomplete knowledge we shall grow in our being towards the gods. By the godheads he will foster our knowledge and lead us towards that universal formation of them in the undivided consciousness of the infinite Aditi which we have chosen as our goal. All that we have done in our ignorance, in our divided and oppressed discernment of things, in our mere mortal becoming and humanity, against gods or men, he shall uncreate and make us free from the sin. For he is the creator of the Right, he is the creator who creates the Truth.

That Truth he shall create in a great wideness and force of our physical being, in a rich abundance of our mental and by its undiminishable vastness he shall uphold all the worlds of our existence. Thus in the working of Savitri whose creation is the Truth and of Mitra and Varuna the gods shall uphold in us its substance of varied light, the felicity of its energies and illuminations till all existence is that godhead of Savitri behind us and before, below as well as above, till we possess the far-extended life and have built up the universal form of our being, — the universal form which he creates for us when with hands of golden light, with the tongue that tastes the wine of sweetness he moves in the triple knowledge of the highest heaven of Truth, attains in the gods to the divine rhythm which he creates for his accomplished Law and takes up his abode in that golden strength of his, the Seer robed in light who first stretched out his two arms of knowledge and power to create the world. He who as Twashtri the Fashioner of things attended always by the male godheads and their female energies, powers of Purusha and powers of Prakriti, made and makes all things, shall as Savitri create for man the thinker born in a body that Truth and Immortality.

THE FOUR KINGS

The creation of Surya Savitri starts from the repeated risings of the divine Dawn and grows by the constant nourishing of her spiritual gifts and possessions through the work in us of Surya

Pushan. But the actual formation, the perfected fullness depend on the birth and growth in us of all the gods, the children of Aditi, the All-Gods (*Viśve Devāḥ*) and especially of the four great luminous Kings, Varuna, Mitra, Bhaga, Aryaman. Indra and the Maruts and the Ribhus, Vayu, Agni, Soma and the Ashwins are indeed the principal agents; Vishnu, Rudra, Brahmanaspati, the future mighty Triad, preside over the indispensable conditions, — for the one paces out the vast framework of the inner worlds in which our soul-action takes place, the other in his wrath and might and violent beneficence forces onward the great evolution and smites the opponent and the recusant and the ill-doer, and the third administers always the seed of the creative word from the profundities of the soul; so too Earth and Heaven and the divine Waters and the great goddesses and Twashtri the Fashioner of things on whom they attend, either provide the field or bring and shape the material; but over the utter creation, over its perfect vast space and pure texture, over the sweet and ordered harmony of its steps, over the illumined force and power of its fulfilment, over its rich, pure and abundant enjoyment and rapture the Sun-gods Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman, Bhaga cast the glory and protection of their divine gaze.

The sacred poems in which the All-Gods and the Adityas, the sons of the Infinite, and Aryaman, Mitra and Varuna are praised, — not the mere hymns of formal invocation to the sacrifice, — are among the most beautiful, solemn and profound that the imagination of man has conceived. The Adityas are described in formulas of an incomparable grandeur and sublimity. No mythic barbarian gods of cloud, sun and shower are these, no confused allegories of wonder-stricken savages, but the objects of worship to men far more inwardly civilised and profound in self-knowledge than ourselves. They may not have yoked the lightning to their chariots, nor weighed sun and star, nor materialised all the destructive forces in Nature to aid them in massacre and domination, but they had measured and fathomed all the heavens and earths within us, they had cast their plummet into the Inconscient and the subconscient and the superconscient; they had read the riddle of death and found the

secret of immortality; they had sought for and discovered the One and known and worshipped Him in the glories of His light and purity and wisdom and power. These were their gods, as great and deep conceptions as ever informed the esoteric doctrine of the Egyptians or inspired the men of an older primitive Greece, the fathers of knowledge who founded the mystic rites of Orpheus or the secret initiation of Eleusis. But over it all there was the "Aryan light", a confidence and joy and a happy, equal friendliness with the Gods which the Aryan brought with him into the world, free from the sombre shadows that fell upon Egypt from contact with the older races, Sons of deep-brooding Earth. These claimed Heaven as their father and their seers had delivered his Sun out of our material darkness.

The self-luminous One is the goal of the Aryan-minded; therefore the seers worshipped him in the image of the Sun. One existent, him have the seers called by various names, Indra, Agni, Yama, Matarishwan. The phrases "That One", "That Truth",[2] occur constantly in the Veda in connection with the Highest and with the image of His workings here, the Sun. In one sublime and mystic chant the refrain returns perpetually, "The vast mightiness of the Gods, — That One." There is the goal of that journey of the Sun by the path of the Truth which we have seen to be also the journey of the awakened and illumined soul. "Concealed by this truth is that Truth of you," of Mitra and Varuna, "where they unyoke the horses of the Sun. The ten hundreds meet there together, — That One, I have seen the supreme God of the embodied gods." But in itself the One is timeless and our mind and being exist in Time. "It is neither today nor tomorrow; who knoweth That which is transcendent? When it is approached, it vanishes from us." Therefore we have to grow towards it by giving birth to the gods in ourselves,[3] increasing their strong and radiant forms, building up their divine bodies, and this new birth and self-building is the true nature of the

2 *Tad ekam, tat satyam* — phrases always carefully misinterpreted by the commentators.

3 *Devavīti, devatāti.*

sacrifice, — the sacrifice through which there is the awakening of our consciousness to immortality.[4]

The sons of the Infinite have a twofold birth. They are born above in the divine Truth as creators of the worlds and guardians of the divine Law; they are born also here in the world itself and in man as cosmic and human powers of the Divine. In the visible world they are the male and female powers and energies of the universe and it is this external aspect of them as gods of the Sun, Fire, Air, Waters, Earth, Ether, the conscious-forces ever present in material being which gives us the external or psycho-physical side of the Aryan worship. The antique view of the world as a psycho-physical and not merely a material reality is at the root of the ancient ideas about the efficacy of the *mantra* and the relation of the gods to the external life of man; hence the force of prayer, worship, sacrifice for material ends; hence the use of them for worldly life and in so-called magic rites which comes out prominently in the Atharva Veda and is behind much of the symbolism of the Brahmanas.[5] But in man himself the gods are conscious psychological powers. "Will-powers, they do the works of will; they are the thinkings in our hearts; they are the lords of delight who take delight; they travel in all the directions of the thought." Without them the soul of man cannot distinguish its right nor its left, what is in front of it nor what is behind, the things of foolishness or the things of wisdom; only if led by them can it reach and enjoy "the fearless Light". For this reason Dawn is addressed "O thou who art human and divine" and the gods constantly described as the "Men" or human powers (*manuṣaḥ*, *naraḥ*); they are our "luminous seers", "our heroes", "our lords of plenitude". They conduct the sacrifice in their human capacity (*manuṣvat*) as well as receive it in their high divine being. Agni is the priest of the oblation, Brihaspati the priest of the word. In this sense Agni is said to be born from the heart of man; all the gods are thus born by the sacrifice,

4 *Amṛtasya cetanam.*

5 This is the real secret of the external sense of Veda which is all that the modern scholars have seen and so imperfectly understood. Even the exoteric religion was much more than a mere Nature worship.

grow and out of their human action assume their divine bodies. Soma, the wine of the world-delight, rushing through the mind which is its "luminous wide-extended" strainer of purification, cleansed there by the ten sisters, pours forth giving birth to the gods.

But the nature of these inner powers is always divine and therefore their tendency is upward to Light and immortality and infinity. They are "the Sons of the Infinite, one in their will and work, pure, purified in the streams, free from crookedness, free from defect, unhurt in their being. Wide, profound, unconquered, conquering, with many organs of vision, they behold within the crooked things and the perfect; all is near to the Kings, even the things that are highest. Sons of the Infinite, they dwell in the movement of the world and uphold it; gods, they are the guardians of all that becomes as universe; far-thoughted, full of the Truth, they guard the Might." They are kings of the universe and of man and of all its peoples (*nṛpati*, *viśpati*), self-emperors, world-emperors, not as the Titans strive to be in the falsehood and the division, but because they are kings of the Truth. For their mother is Aditi "in whom there is no duality", Aditi "the luminous undivided who upholds the divine habitation that is of the world of Light" and to her her sons "cleave ever waking". They are "most straight" in their being, will, thought, delight, action, movement, they are "thinkers of the Truth whose law of nature is the law of the Truth", they are "seers and hearers of the Truth". They are "charioteers of the Truth, whose seat is in its mansions, purified in discernment, unconquerable, the Men wide-visioned". They are the "Immortals who know the Truth". Thus free from the falsehood and the crookedness, these inner divinities rise in us to their natural level, home, plane, world. "Of a double birth they are true in their being and lay hold on the Truth, very vast and one in the Light and are possessed of its luminous world."

In this upward movement they cleave away from us the evil and the ignorance. These are they who "cross beyond into the sinlessness and the undivided existence". Therefore they are "the gods who deliver". For the enemy, the assailant, the doer of

harm their knowledge becomes as if snares wide-spread, for to him light is a cause of blindness, the divine movement of good an occasion of evil and a stumbling-block; but the soul of the Aryan seer passes beyond these dangers like a mare hastening with a chariot. In the leading of the gods he avoids all stumblings into evil like so many pitfalls. Aditi, Mitra and Varuna forgive him whatever sin he may have committed against their vast oneness, purity, harmony so that he can hope to enjoy the wide and fearless Light and the long nights shall not come upon him. That the Vedic gods are no mere physical Nature-powers, but the psychic conscious forces behind and within all cosmic things, is made clear enough by the connection between their cosmic character and this deliverance from sin and falsehood: "Since ye are they who rule over the world by the power of their mind of knowledge, thinkers of all that is stable and mobile, therefore, O gods, carry us beyond the sin of that which we have done and that which we have not done to the felicity."

There is always the image of the path and the journey, the Path of the Truth on which we are led forward by a divine leading. "O Sons of the Infinite, effect for us the fearless peace, make us good paths of an easy going to the felicity." "Easy of going is your path, O Aryaman, O Mitra, it is thornless, O Varuna, and perfect." "They whom the Sons of Infinity lead with good leadings pass beyond all sin and evil to the felicity." Always that goal is the felicity, the wide bliss and peace, the unbroken Light, the vast Truth, the Immortality. "O ye gods, put far from us the hostile (dividing) force, give us wide peace for the felicity." "The Sons of Infinity give us the imperishable Light." "Create the Light, O ye minds of knowledge of our sacrifice." "That increasing birth of you we would know today, O sons of the Infinite, which creates, O Aryaman, even in this world of fear the beatitude." For it is the "fearless Light" that is created, where there is no peril of death, sin, suffering, ignorance, — the light of the undivided, infinite, immortal, rapturous Soul of things. For "these are the rapturous lords of Immortality, even Aryaman and Mitra and Varuna all-pervading."

Still, it is in the image of Swar, the world of the divine

Truth that the goal is concretely figured. “Let us reach” is the aspiration “the Light that is of Swar, the Light which none can tear asunder.” Swar is the great, inviolable birth of Mitra, Varuna, Aryaman which is contained in the luminous heavens of the soul. The all-ruling Kings, because they grow perfectly and there is no crookedness in them, hold our habitation in heaven. That is the triple world in which the uplifted consciousness of man reflects the three divine principles of being, its infinite existence, its infinite conscious-force, its infinite bliss.[6] “Three earths they hold, three heavens, three workings of these gods in the Knowledge within; by the Truth, O Sons of Infinity, great is that vastness of yours, O Aryaman, O Mitra, O Varuna, great and beautiful. Three heavenly worlds of light they hold, the gods golden-shining who are pure and purified in the streams; sleepless, unconquerable they close not their lids, they express the wideness to the mortal who is straight.” These all-purifying streams are those of the rain, the abundance, the rivers of the heaven of Truth. “Charioted in light are they, aggressive in knowledge, sinless and they clothe themselves in the rain and abundance of heaven for the felicity.” By the pouring out of that abundance they prepare our souls to ascend to its source, the higher ocean from which the luminous waters descend.

It will be seen how largely the great triad, Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman figure in the hymns to the All-Gods and to the sons of the Infinite Mother. With Bhaga as a consummating fourth they dominate the thought of the Rishis in their culminant aspiration to the mass and apex of the perfect truth and infinity. This pre-eminence they owe to their particular character and functions which appear, not often indeed with any great prominence, but as a background to their common action, their united nature of light, their undifferentiated achievement. For they have one light, one work, they perfect in us one indivisible Truth; and it is this union of all the godheads in our consenting universality[7] that is the objective of the Vedic thought in these Aditya hymns.

[6] *Tridhātu.*
[7] *Viśvadevyam.*

Still the union comes about by a combination of their powers and therefore each has in it his own proper nature and function. That of the Four is to build up the whole divine state into its perfection by the natural interaction of its four essential elements. The Divine is existence all-embracing, infinite and pure; Varuna brings to us the infinite oceanic space of the divine soul and its ethereal, elemental purity. The Divine is boundless consciousness, perfect in knowledge, pure and therefore luminously right in its discernment of things, perfectly harmonious and happy in its concordance of their law and nature; Mitra brings us this light and harmony, this right distinction and relation and friendly concord, the happy laws of the liberated soul concordant with itself and the Truth in all its rich thought, shining actions and thousandfold enjoyment. The Divine is in its own being pure and perfect power and in us the eternal upward tendency in things to their source and truth; Aryaman brings to us this mighty strength and perfectly-guided happy inner upsurging. The Divine is the pure, the faultless, the all-embracing, the untroubled ecstasy that enjoys its own infinite being and enjoys equally all that it creates within itself; Bhaga gives us sovereignly that ecstasy of the liberated soul, its free and unfallen possession of itself and the world.

This quaternary is practically the later essential trinity of Sachchidananda, — Existence, Consciousness, Bliss with self-awareness and self-force, Chit and Tapas, for double terms of Consciousness; but it is here translated into its cosmic terms and equivalents. Varuna the King has his foundation in the all-pervading purity of Sat; Mitra the Happy and the Mighty, most beloved of the Gods, in the all-uniting light of Chit; many-charioted Aryaman in the movement and all-discerning force of Tapas; Bhaga in the all-embracing joy of Ananda. Yet as all these things form one in the realised godhead, as each element of the trinity contains the others in itself and none of them can exist separately from the rest, therefore each of the Four also possesses by force of his own essential quality every general attribute of his brothers. For this reason if we do not read the Veda as carefully as it was written, we shall miss its distinctions and see only the indistinguishable common functions of these luminous Kings,

— as indeed throughout the hymns the unity in difference of all the gods makes it difficult for the mind not accustomed to the subtleties of psychological truth to find in the Vedic divinities anything but a confused mass of common or interchangeable attributes. But the distinctions are there and have as great a force and importance as in the Greek and Egyptian symbolism. Each god contains in himself all the others, but remains still himself in his peculiar function.

This nature of the difference between the Four explains their varying prominence in the Veda. Varuna is easily the first and most considerable of them all, for realisation of infinite existence is the basis of the Vedic perfection: the wideness and purity of the divine being once attained, all the rest comes inevitably contained in it as possession and power and attribute. Mitra is seldom hymned except in union with Varuna or else as a name and form of the other gods, — oftenest of the cosmic worker Agni, — when arriving in their action to the harmony and the light they reveal in themselves the divine Friend. To the twin-power Mitra-Varuna the greater number of the hymns to the luminous Kings are addressed, a certain number to Varuna separately or to Varuna-Indra, one to Mitra, two or three to Bhaga, none at all to Aryaman. For the infinite wideness and purity being founded, the luminous harmony of the workings of the gods by the correlated laws of the different planes of our being from the spiritual to the material has to be realised in that continent and on that foundation; and this is the combination Mitra-Varuna. The power of Aryaman is hardly viewed as an independent principle, — just as force in the world is only a manifestation, movement or dynamic value of existence, is only a working out, a liberation of consciousness, of knowledge, of the inherent Truth of things into stuff of energy and form of effect, or is only the effective term of the self-discovering and self-seizing movement by which Being and Consciousness realise themselves as Bliss. Therefore Aryaman is invoked always in conjunction with Aditi or Varuna or Mitra or in the great realising Triad or in the realised quaternary or in the general invocation of the All-Gods and the Adityas.

Bhaga on the other hand is the crown of our movement to the possession of the hidden divine Truth of our existence; for the essence of that Truth is beatitude. Bhaga is Savitri himself; the All-Enjoyer is the Creator fulfilled in the divine purpose of his creation. Therefore he is the result more than the agent, or else the last agent of all, the possessor more than the giver of our spiritual plenitude.

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The hymn of the Rishi Vamadeva to the All-Gods shows with a clear lucidity the high-aspiring hope which these Vedic deities were invoked to favour and bring to a happy culmination: —

"Who of you is our deliverer? who our defender? O Earth and Heaven, free from division, deliver us; rescue, O Mitra, O Varuna, from the mortality that is too strong for us! Who of you, O gods, confirms for us the supreme good in the march of the sacrifice? They who illumine our high original seats, they who limitless in knowledge dawn out putting away our darkness, it is they, imperishable all-ordainers, who order them for us; thinkers out of the Truth, they shine forth in light, achievers. I seek for my companion by the words illumining the flowing river Aditi, she who is the divine felicity. O Night and Dawn unconquerable, so do ye make it that both the Days shall utterly protect us. Aryaman and Varuna distinguish the Path, and Agni lord of the impulsion, the path of the happy goal. O Indra and Vishnu, affirmed, extend to us perfectly the peace in which are the Powers, the mighty protection. I embrace the increasings of Parvata and of the Maruts and of Bhaga, our divine deliverer. May the master of things protect us from the sin of the world and Mitra keep us far from the sin against Mitra. Now shall one affirm the goddesses Earth and Heaven with the Dragon of the foundation by all the things desired that we must obtain; as if to possess that Ocean by their wide ranging they have uncovered the (hidden) rivers that are voiceful with the burning Light. May goddess Aditi with the gods protect us, may the divine Deliverer deliver us, unremitting; let us not diminish the foundation of

Mitra and Varuna and the high level of Agni. Agni is the lord of that vast substance of riches and perfected enjoyment; he lavishes on us those abundances. O Dawn, voice of the Truth, queen of plenitude, bring to us the many desirable boons, thou who hast in thee all their plenty. To that goal may Savitri, Bhaga, Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman, Indra move aright for us with riches of our felicity."

VARUNA

We have the word Varuna from a root which means to surround, cover or pervade. From these significances of the name there emerged before the poetic eye of the ancient mystics the images that are our nearest concrete representation of the Infinite. They saw God as a highest covering Heaven, felt divine existence like an encompassing ocean, lived in its boundless presence as in a pure and pervading ether. Varuna is this highest heaven, this soul-surrounding ocean, this ethereal possession and infinite pervasion.

The same root had given them an appellation for the dark Coverer, the adversary Vritra; for to obstruct and resist, screen or hedge, besiege and hem in are also some of its many kindred senses. But dark Vritra is the thick cloud and the enveloping shadow. His knowledge — for he too has a knowledge, a Maya, — is the sense of limited being and the hiding away in subconscient Night all the rest of the rich and vast existence that should be ours, and for this negation and contrary power of creative knowledge he stands up stiffly against the Gods, — his undivine right against the divine right of God and man. Varuna by his wide being and ample vision rolls back these limits; surrounding us with light his possession reveals what dark Vritra's obsession had withheld and obscured. His godhead is the form or spiritual image of an embracing and illuminating Infinity.

For this reason the physical figure of Varuna is much less definite than the burning Fire or the radiant Sun or the luminous Dawn. The old commentators thought strangely enough that he was the God of Night. In the Puranas he is the deity of the waters

and his noose, which in the Veda never pretends to be anything more than a psychological metaphor, has become the violent lasso of the ocean-god. European scholars have identified him with the Greek Uranus and perceiving something of his original ethereal nature have supposed a conceptual transference, a sort of fall or even a deposition from azure above to azure below. Indra, perhaps, becoming master of the skies and king of the gods, Varuna the original King had to be satisfied with the dominion of the waters. If we understand the symbolic method of the mystics, we shall see that these suppositions are unnecessary. Their method is to combine various ideas and images contained together in a general conception which gives all the links. So, Varuna of the Veda is at once King — not of the heavens as such, for that is Dyaushpita, nor of the heavens of light, for that is Indra, — but of the highest covering ether and all oceans. All expanses are Varuna's; every infinity is his property and estate.

Ether and ocean meet together and become one in the mystic conception; and the origin of this unity is not far to seek. The ancient concept of creation, held all over the world from the Himalayas to the Andes, conceived of the stuff of things as a formless expanse of waters covered over in the beginning by darkness out of which day and night and heaven and earth and all worlds have emerged. "Darkness," says the Hebrew Genesis, "was upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God moved on the waters." By the word he divided the waters with Heaven, the firmament; so that now there are two waters, one earthly below the firmament, the other heavenly above. The mystics seized on this universal belief or this universal image and crowded into it their opulent psychological values. Instead of one firmament they saw two, the earthly and the celestial; instead of two oceans, three spread out before their unsealed vision.

What they saw, was what man will ever see when he changes the physical for the psychical vision of Nature and the world. Below them they looked down on an unfathomable night and surging obscurity, darkness hidden within darkness, the inconscient waters from which by the mighty energy of the One their

existence had arisen. Above them they beheld a remote ocean of light and sweetness, a highest ether, the supreme step of all-blissful Vishnu, to which their attracted being must ascend. One of these was the dense dark ether, an unformed material inconscient Non-existence; the other a luminous ethereal All-conscient and the absolute of existence. These two were the dark and the shining extension of the One.

Between these two unknown infinities, infinite potential zero and infinite plenary *x*, they saw around them, before their eyes, below, above, a third sea of ever-developing conscious being, a sort of boundless wave, which they spoke of by a hardy metaphor as climbing up or flowing up beyond heaven to the supreme seas. It is this perilous ocean which we have to navigate. There Bhujyu, the seeker of enjoyment, son of King Tugra the Forceful-Hastening, was about to sink, cast in by his false companions, souls of an evil movement; but the marvellous chariot-ship of the Ashwins came hastening to his succour. Varuna must teach with his vast Right and Truth our limited will and judgment, if we would escape such perils: we must embark in no human galley, but "ascend the divine ship, the blameless and well-oared vessel that sinketh not, by which may we voyage safe beyond sin and evil." Into this intermediate ocean, *above* our earth, we have seen the sun of Knowledge rise out of the inconscient cave and voyage led by the seers. For this too is an ocean-ether. Or, let us say, it is a tier of ethers. To follow the Vedic imagery we must suppose ocean superimposed upon ocean. This world is a series of heights that are depths and a mutual involution and evolution of vastnesses that have no ending: ether below rises to ever more luminous ether above, every stratum of consciousness rests upon many inferior and aspires to many higher strata.

But beyond our farthest skies in the supreme ocean of light and expanse of the highest superconscient ether our haven awaits us in a Truth hidden by lesser truth, even as in the inconscient Night darkness is enwrapped and protected by an ever greater darkness. That is the truth of King Varuna. Thither the Dawns shining arise, the rivers travel and the Sun unyokes there the

horses of his chariot. And Varuna contains, sees, governs all this in his vast being and by his illimitable knowledge. All these oceans are his, even to the Inconscient and its nights so opposite in their seeming to his nature which is that of the extended radiance of one eternal, vast sun of happy light and truth. Day and Night, light and darkness are symbols in his infinity. "Luminous Varuna has embraced the nights; he holds the Dawns within him by his creative knowledge; visioned, he is around every object."

From this idea of the oceans arose naturally the psychological concept of the Vedic rivers. These rivers are everywhere. They are the waters which flow down from the mountain and ascend the mind ranging through and illuminating with their flow the dark subconscient secrets of Vritra; they are the mighty ones of Heaven whom Indra brings down on the Earth; they are the streams of the Truth; they are the rain from its luminous heavens; they are the seven eternal sisters and companions; they are the divine waters who have knowledge. They descend upon the earth, they rise from the ocean, they flow to the ocean, they break out from the doors of the Panis, they ascend to the supreme seas.

Oceanic Varuna is king of all these waters. "In the uprising of the rivers" it is said "he is a brother of seven sisters, he is in their middle." And another Rishi has sung, "In the rivers Varuna is seated upholding the law of his works, perfect in will for empire." Vasishtha speaks with a more explicit crowding of psychological suggestions, of "the divine, pure and purifying waters, honey-pouring, in the midst of whom King Varuna marches looking down on the truth and the falsehood in creatures." Varuna too, like Indra with whom he is often associated, releases the waters; sped from his mighty hands they too, like him, become all-pervading and flow to a limitless goal. "The son of Infinity, the wide upholder, has loosed them forth everywhere; the rivers journey to the truth of Varuna."

Not only the goal, the march too is his. "Varuna of the puissance and the thousandfold vision beholds the goal of these rivers; he is the king of the kingdoms, he is the form of the rivers, for him is a strength supreme and universal." His oceanic

movement envelops all the kingdoms of being and ascends to the Paradise of the heaven of heavens. "He is the hidden ocean" it is said "and he climbs passing beyond heaven; when he has set the sacrificial word in these dawns, then with his luminous foot he tramples asunder illusions and ascends to Paradise." Varuna, we see, is the oceanic surge of the hidden Divine as he rises, progressively manifested, to his own infinite wideness and ecstasy in the soul of the god-liberated seer.

The illusions which he shatters with his tread are the false formations of the Lords of Evil. Varuna, because he is this ether of divine Truth and ocean of divine being, is what no personified physical sea or sky could ever become, the pure and majestic King who strikes down evil and delivers from sin. Sin is a violation of the purity of the divine Right and Truth; its reaction is the wrath of the Pure and Puissant. Against those who like the Sons of Darkness serve self-will and ignorance, the king of the divine Law hurls his weapons; the cord descends upon them; they fall into the snare of Varuna. But those who seek after the Truth with sacrifice are delivered from bondage to sin like a calf released from the rope or a victim set free from the slaying-post. The Rishis deprecate frequently the retributive violence of Varuna and pray to him to deliver them from sin and its wages, death. "Repel the Destruction away from us," they cry, "loose from us even the sin that we have done"; or, always with the same sense of a chain and a bondage, "Cleave away sin from me like a cord."

The crude conception of sin as a result of natural wickedness found no place in the thought of these deep thinkers and subtle psychologists. What they perceived, was a great insistent force of Ignorance; either a non-perception of right and truth in the mind or a non-seizing of it in the will, or an inability of the life instincts and desires to follow after it, or the sheer inefficiency of the physical being to rise to the greatness of the divine law. Vasishtha cries to mighty Varuna in a passionate litany, "It is from poverty of the will that we have gone contrary to thee, O pure and puissant One: be gracious to us, have grace. Thirst found thy adorer though he stood in the middle of the waters;

be gracious, O puissant Lord, have grace. Whatever this be, O Varuna, that we human beings act, a treason against the Divine Birth, wheresoever by the Ignorance we have put away thy laws, smite us not for that sin, O God."

Ignorance, this matrix of sin, has in its substantial effect the appearance of a triple cord of limited mind, inefficient life, obscure physical animality, the three ropes with which the Rishi Shunahshepa in the parable was bound as a victim to the sacrificial post. The whole result is a struggling or inert poverty of being; it is the meagreness of a mortal undelight and the insufficiency of a being that collapses at every moment towards death. When Varuna the Mighty comes and sunders this threefold restraint, we are freed towards riches and immortality. Uplifted, the real man arises to his true kingship in the undivided being. The upper cord flies upward releasing the wings of the Soul into superconscient heights; the middle cord parts both ways and all ways, the constrained life breaking out into a happy breadth of existence; the lower cord collapses downward taking with it the alloy of our physical being to disappear and be dissolved in the stuff of the Inconscient. This liberation is the purport of the parable of Shunahshepa and his two great hymns to Varuna.

As ignorance or falsehood in the being — the Veda prefers usually the less abstract phrase — is the cause of wrong and suffering, so Knowledge or Truth is the agent which purifies and liberates. It is because of the eye with which he sees, — the luminous symbolic Sun, — that Varuna is the purifier. And unless he governs the will and teaches the judgment while the divine Thought is being learned, we cannot ascend on to the ship of the gods to be borne by it over the life-ocean beyond all this stumbling and evil. Dwelling in us as the thinker with knowledge Varuna cleaves away the sin that we have committed; he abolishes by his royal power our debts of the Ignorance. Or, using a different image, the Veda tells us that this King has in his service a thousand physicians; it is by their healing of our mental and moral infirmities that we get a secure foundation in Varuna's wide and deep right-mindedness.

The Kingship of great Varuna is an unbounded empire over

all being. He is a mighty world-ruler, an emperor, *samrāṭ*. His epithets and descriptions are those which a mind at once religious and philosophic could apply with little or no change to the supreme and universal Godhead. He is the vastness and the multiplicity; among his usual epithets are vast Varuna, abundant Varuna, Varuna of whom wideness is the habitation, Varuna of many births. But his puissant being is not only a universal wideness; it is a universal force and might. The Veda says of him in words that have both an outward and an inward significance: "Thy force and might and passion neither these Birds in their travelling can attain, nor these Waters ranging sleeplessly, nor they who hedge in the hugeness of the wind." It is a force of universal existence which is active around and in all that lives.[8] Behind this vast universality of force and being there watches and acts a vast universality of knowledge. The epithet of kinghood is constantly coupled with the epithet of seerhood, not otiosely but in the strong, pregnant antique style. Varuna has a manifold energy, — the hero's, — and wide expression, — the thinker's; he comes to us as a godhead of the glory of force and in the same movement we find in him a soul of wide vision.

The full significance of this constant coupling of epithets appears in the double character of his sovereignty; he is *svarāṭ* and *samrāṭ*, self-ruler and emperor. They are the two faces of Aryan kingship. In man they are a royalty of thought and action and the plenitude of wisdom and will; the King-Sage, the Hero-Thinker. In the Godhead, in Varuna "almighty, omniscient, thousand-visioned, whose form is the Truth", they lift us up to supreme and universal principles; we see revealed a divine and eternal majesty, the plenitude of consciousness and the plenitude of Force, Wisdom omnipotent, Power omniscient, Law justified, Truth fulfilled.

Varuna, the Vedic symbol of this grandiose conception, is described finely as a vast thinker and guardian of the Truth. In him, it is said, all wisdoms are lodged and gathered up into their nodus; he is the divine Seer who nurtures the seer-knowings of

8 *Viśvāyu*.

man as if heaven were increasing its form. We find here the key to the symbol of the luminous cows. For it is said of him that, upholder of the worlds, he knows the hidden names of these shining ones and the thoughts of the seers go beyond like cows to the pastures desiring the wide-visioned. It is said of him too that he guards for the Maruts, greatened in knowledge, the thoughts of men like the cows of a herd.

That is the side of thought; there are parallel descriptions for the side of action. Great Varuna is the continent and nodus of the world's uplifted puissances no less than of its arising thoughts. The unconquered workings that fall not from the Truth are established in him as upon a mountain. Because he thus knows the things that are transcendent, he is able to cast his majestic eye of sovereignty upon our existence and see there "the things that are done and those that remain to be done". The things that remain to be done — and also to be known. The wisdom of Varuna shapes in us the divine word which, inspired, intuitive, opens the doors to new knowledge. "We desire him" cries the Rishi "as the finder of the Path because he unveils the thought by the heart; let new truth be born." For this King is no whirler of a brute and stupid wheel; his are not the unfruitful cycles of a meaningless Law. There is a Path; there is a constant progress; there is a goal.

Varuna is the leader on this path. "Perfect in will" cries Shunahshepa "let the son of Infinity make us by the good path and carry our life forward. Varuna puts on his golden robe of light and his scouts are all around." These detect the ambushed foes of the Light, the piercers of our hearts — who would prevent, it is to be supposed, the unveiling of the Truth-thought by the heart. For this journey which we saw as a march of the waters, we see also as a journey of the sun with the all-wise and all-powerful King for its Guide. In the vast where there is no foundation Varuna has built a high pyramid of the fuel of sacrifice for the fire that must be the blazing material of a divine Sun. "Its rays are directed downward, their foundation is above; let their perceptions of knowledge be established in us within. King Varuna has made a wide path for the Sun to follow; where

there is no footing he has made places for him to set his feet. He shall make manifest too those who pierce the heart." His purity is a great devourer of the hurters of the soul.

The Path is a constant making and building of new truth, new powers, higher realisations, new worlds. All heights to which we can climb from the basis of our physical existence are described in symbolic figure as mountain summits upon the earth and Varuna of the vision holds them all in himself. World after world is reached as level and ever higher level of a great mountain; the voyager in the forward march of Varuna is said to lay his grasp on all things that are born in all the statuses. But his final goal must be the highest triple world of the Deva. "Three delightful Dawns increase according to the law of his workings. He of the all-seeing wisdom dwells in three white-shining earths; three are the higher worlds of Varuna whence he rules over the harmonies of seven and seven. He is the builder of the original seat, 'That Truth' of Varuna; and he is the guardian and the mover."

In sum, then, Varuna is the ethereal, oceanic, infinite King of wide being, wide knowledge and wide might, a manifestation of the one God's active omniscience and omnipotence, a mighty guardian of the Truth, punisher and healer, Lord of the noose and Releaser from the cords, who leads thought and action towards the vast light and power of a remote and high-uplifted Truth. Varuna is the King of all kingdoms and of all divine and mortal beings; earth and heaven and every world are only his provinces.

MITRA

If the purity, infinity, strong royalty of Varuna are the grand framework and majestic substance of the divine being, Mitra is its beauty and perfection. To be infinite, pure, a king over oneself and a master-soul must be the nature of the divine man because so he shares in the nature of God. But the Vedic ideal is not satisfied simply with a large, unfulfilled plan of the divine image. There must be noble and rich contents in this vast continent; the

many-roomed tenement of our being contained in Varuna has to be ordered by Mitra in the right harmony of its utility and its equipment.

For the godhead is a plenitude as well as an infinity; Varuna is an ocean no less than an ethereal heaven. Pure and subtle as the ether, his strong substance is yet no serene void or easy vague of inactive peace, but rather we have seen in it a surging march of thought and action; he has been described to us as a nodus in which all wisdom is upgathered and a hill upon which the original, unfallen workings of the gods are supported. King Varuna is one who sleeps not, but is awake and mighty forever, eternally an effective force and worker for the Truth and the Right. Still he acts as the guardian of the Truth rather than constitutes it, or constitutes rather through the action of other godheads who avail themselves of his wideness and surging force. He keeps, drives even the shining herds, but does not assemble them in the pastures, an upholder of our powers and remover of obstacles and enemies much more than a builder of our parts.

Who then gathers knowledge into this nodus or links divine action in this sustainer of works? Mitra is the harmoniser, Mitra the builder, Mitra the constituent Light, Mitra the god who effects the right unity of which Varuna is the substance and the infinitely self-enlarging periphery. These two Kings are complementary to each other in their nature and their divine works. In them we find and by them we gain harmony in largeness: we see in the Godhead and increase in ourselves purity without defect basing love faultless in wisdom. Therefore these two are a great duo of the self-fulfilling godhead and the Vedic word calls them together to a vaster and vaster sacrifice to which they arrive as the inseparable builders of an increasing Truth. Madhuchchhandas gives us the keynote of their united divinity. "Mitra I call, the pure in judgment, and Varuna, devourer of the foe. By Truth, Mitra and Varuna, Truth-increasers who get to the touch of Truth, you attain to a vast working of the will. Seers, dwellers in the wideness, born with many births, they uphold the judgment at its works."

The name Mitra comes from a root which meant originally

to contain with compression and so to embrace and has given us the ordinary Sanskrit word for friend, *mitra*, as well as the archaic Vedic word for bliss, *mayas*. Upon the current sense of the word *mitra*, the Friend, the Vedic poets continually rely for their covert key to the psychological function of this apparent sungod. When the other deities and especially the brilliant Agni are spoken of as helpful friends to the human sacrificer, they are said to be Mitra, or to be like Mitra, or to become Mitra, — as we should now say, the divine Will-force, or whatever other power and personality of the godhead, reveals itself eventually as the divine Love. Therefore we must suppose that to these symbolists Mitra was essentially the Lord of Love, a divine friend, a kindly helper of men and immortals. The Veda speaks of him as the most beloved of the gods.

The Vedic seers looked at Love from above, from its source and root and saw it and received it in their humanity as an outflowing of the divine Delight. The Taittiriya Upanishad expounding this spiritual and cosmic bliss of the godhead, Vedantic Ananda, Vedic Mayas, says of it, "Love is its head." But the word it chooses for Love, *priyam*, means properly the delightfulness of the objects of the soul's inner pleasure and satisfaction. The Vedic singers used the same psychology. They couple *mayas* and *prayas*, — *mayas*, the principle of inner felicity independent of all objects, *prayas*, its outflowing as the delight and pleasure of the soul in objects and beings. The Vedic happiness is this divine felicity which brings with it the boon of a pure possession and sinless pleasure in all things founded upon the unfailing touch of the Truth and Right in the freedom of a large universality.

Mitra is the most beloved of the gods because he brings within our reach this divine enjoyment and leads us to this perfect happiness. Varuna makes directly for strength; we discover a force and a will vast in purity; Aryaman the Aspirer is secured in the amplitude of his might by Varuna's infinity; he does his large works and effects his great movement by the power of Varuna's universality. Mitra makes directly for bliss, — Bhaga the Enjoyer is established in a blameless possession and divine enjoyment by the all-reconciling harmony of Mitra, by his purifying light of

right discernment, his firmly-basing law. Therefore it is said of Mitra that all perfected souls adhere or are firmly fixed "to the bliss of this Beloved in whom there is no hurt", for in him there is no sin or wound or falling. All mortal delight has its mortal danger; but the immortal light and law secures the soul of man in a fearless joy. That mortal, says Vishwamitra, who learns by Mitra's law, the law of this Son of Infinity, is possessed of *prayas*, the soul's satisfaction in its objects; such a soul cannot be slain, nor overcome, nor can any evil take possession of it from near or from afar. For Mitra fashions in gods and men impulsions whose action spontaneously fulfils all the soul's seekings.

That happy freedom of all-possession comes to us out of this godhead's universality and his reconciling luminous embrace of things: Mitra's is the principle of harmony by which the manifold workings of the Truth agree together in a perfectly wedded union. The root of the name means both to embrace and to contain and hold and, again, to build or form in the sense of linking together the parts or materials of a whole. Adorable Mitra is born in us as a blissful ordainer of things and a king full of might. Mitra holds up heaven and earth and looks sleeplessly upon the worlds and the peoples, and his vigilant and perfect ordinances create in us a happy rightness of mind and feeling — *sumati*, a state of grace, we might almost say, — which becomes for us an unhurt abiding-place. "Free from all undelightfulness," says the Vedic verse, "rejoicing with rapture in the goddess of the Word, bowing the knee in the wideness of earth, may we attain to our abiding-place in the law of working of Mitra, son of Infinity, and dwell in his grace." It is when Agni becomes Mitra, when the divine Will realises the divine Love that, in the Vedic image, the Lord and his Spouse agree in their mansion.

The well-accorded happiness of the Truth is Mitra's law of working; for it is upon Truth and divine Knowledge that this harmony and perfect temperament are founded; they are formed, secured and guarded by the Maya of Mitra and Varuna. That well-known word comes from the same root as Mitra. Maya is the comprehending, measuring, forming Knowledge which

whether divine or undivine, secure in the undivided being of Aditi or labouring in the divided being of Diti, builds up the whole scene, environment, confines, and defines the whole condition, law and working of our existence. Maya is the active, originative, determinative view which creates for each being according to his own consciousness his own world. But Mitra is a Lord of the Light, a Son of Infinity and a Guardian of the Truth and his Maya part of an infinite, supreme and faultless creative wisdom. He builds, he joins together in an illuminated harmony all the numerous planes, all the successive steps, all the graded seats of our being. Whatsoever Aryaman aspires to on his path, has to be effected by the 'holdings' or laws of Mitra or by his foundations, statuses, placings, *mitrasya dharmabhiḥ*, *mitrasya dhāmabhiḥ*. For *dharma*, the law is that which holds things together and to which we hold; *dhāma*, the status is the placing of the law in a founded harmony which creates for us our plane of living and the character of our consciousness, action and thought.

Mitra, like the other sons of Aditi, is a master of Knowledge. He possesses a light which is full of a varied inspiration, or, to keep closer to the Vedic term, a richly diversified hearing of the knowledge. In the wideness of existence which he enjoys in common with Varuna, he acquires possession of heaven by that greatness of the being of the Truth and enlarges his conquering mastery over the earth by these inspirations or hearings of its Knowledge. All the five Aryan peoples labour therefore and travel for this bright and beautiful Mitra who comes into them with his luminous force and bears in his wideness all the Gods. He is the great and blissful one who sets and leads creatures born into the world upon their path. The distinction is drawn in one verse that Varuna is the masterful traveller to the soul's supreme seat, Mitra makes men advance in that march. "Even now" says the Rishi "may I attain the movement to the goal and journey on Mitra's path."

Since Mitra cannot fulfil his harmony except in the wideness and purity of Varuna, he is constantly invoked in company with that great godhead. Theirs are the supreme statuses or planes of

the soul; it is the bliss of Mitra and Varuna that has to increase in us. By their law that vast plane of our consciousness shines out upon us and heaven and earth are the two paths of their journey. For Aditi of the Truth, their mother, has borne them omniscient and great for almightiness; and it is luminous Aditi, the undivided being, whom they, wakeful from day to day, cleave to, she who holds for us our habitations in that world of light and they attain to its luminous forcefulness. They are the two Sons perfect in their birth from of old who support the law of our action; children are they of a vast luminous power, offspring of the divine discerning thought and perfect in will. They are the guardians of Truth, possessed of its law in the supreme ether. Swar is their golden home and birth-place.

Mitra and Varuna have an unwounded vision and are better knowers of the Path than our sight; for in the Knowledge they are seers of Swar. They take by the passion of their discerning thought the concealing falsehood away from the Truth to which the path has to lead. They proclaim the vast Truth of which they are possessed. It is because they possess it and with it the perfection of the will which is its effect, that they are seated in us for empire and uphold our action as the masters of might. By Truth they come to the Truth, nourishing in their lordship of things our thoughts, and in their purified judgment they open the eye of consciousness to all wisdom by the perception in men. Thus all-seeing and all-knowing they by the law, by the Maya of the mighty Lord, guard our actions, even as they govern the whole world in the power of the Truth. That Maya is established in the heavens, it ranges there as a Sun of light; it is their rich and wonderful weapon. They are far-hearers, masters of true being, true themselves and increasers of truth in each human creature. They nourish the shining herds and loose forth the abundance of heaven; they make heaven to rain down by the Maya of the Mighty Lord. And that celestial rain is the wealth of the spiritual felicity which the seers desire; it is the immortality.[9]

[9] *Vṛṣṭiṁ vāṁ rādho amṛtatvam īmahe.*

ARYAMAN

Aryaman, third of the four great solar godheads, is the least prominent of them all in the invocations of the seers. No separate hymn is addressed to him and, if his name occurs not unfrequently, it is in scattered verses; there is no strong body of Riks from which we can construct firmly our idea of his functions or recompose his physiognomy. Most often he is simply invoked by his bare name along with Mitra and Varuna or in the larger group of the sons of Aditi, almost always in adjunction to other kindred deities. Still there are half a dozen or more half-riks from which his one chief and characteristic action emerges accompanied by the usual epithets of the Lords of the Truth, epithets expressive of Knowledge, Joy, Infinity and Power.

In the later tradition the name of Aryaman is placed at the head of the Fathers to whom as their appropriate offering is given the symbolic food, the *piṇḍa* of the Puranic funeral and memorial rites. In the Puranic traditions the Fathers are of two classes, divine and human, the latter being the ancestors, the Manes. But it is in connection with the Fathers as the souls who have attained to heaven, to immortality that we must think of Aryaman. Krishna in the Gita, enumerating the chief powers or manifestations of the eternal Godhead in things and beings, speaks of himself as Ushanas among the seers, Bhrigu among the Rishis, Vyasa among the sages, Vishnu among the children of Aditi, Aryaman among the Fathers. Now in the Veda the Fathers are the ancient illumined ones who discovered the Knowledge, created and followed the Path, reached the Truth, conquered Immortality; and in the few Riks in which Aryaman's separate personality emerges, it is as the God of the Path that he is hymned.

His name Aryaman, kin etymologically to the words *arya*, *ārya*, *ari*, by which are distinguished the men or peoples who follow the Vedic culture and the Gods who assist them in their battles and their aspirations, is similarly indicative. The Aryan is the traveller on the Path, the aspirant to immortality by divine sacrifice, one of the shining children of Light, a worshipper of the

Masters of the Truth, a fighter in the battle against the powers of darkness who obstruct the human journey. Aryaman is the godhead in whose divine power this Aryahood is rooted; he is this Force of sacrifice, aspiration, battle, journey towards perfection and light and celestial bliss by which the path is created, travelled, pursued beyond all resistance and obscuration to its luminous and happy goal.

In consequence, the action of Aryaman takes up the attributes of Mitra and Varuna as leaders of the Path. This Force fulfils the happy impulsions of that Light and Harmony and the movement of infinite knowledge and power of that pure Vastness. Like Mitra and Varuna he makes men travel on the path; he is full of the perfect happiness of Mitra; he is complete in the will and the works of sacrifice; he and Varuna distinguish the path for mortals. He is like Varuna a godhead manifold in his births; like him he oppresses the wrath of the hurter of men. It is by the great path of Aryaman that we shall cross beyond the souls of a false or evil thought who obstruct our path. Aditi, mother of the Kings, and Aryaman carry us by paths of a happy travelling beyond all inimical powers. The man who seeks the straightness of Mitra's and Varuna's workings and by the force of the word and the affirmation embraces their law with all his being, is guarded in his progress by Aryaman.

But the Rik most distinctive of the function of Aryaman is that which describes him as "Aryaman of the unbroken path, of the many chariots, who dwells as the sevenfold offerer of sacrifice in births of diverse forms." He is the deity of the human journey who carries it forward in its irresistible progress which the attacks of the enemy cannot overcome or successfully interrupt so long as this divine Force is our leader. The journey is effected through a manifold movement of our evolution, the many chariots of Aryaman. It is the journey of the human sacrifice which has a sevenfold energy of its action because there is a sevenfold principle in our being which has to be fulfilled in its integral perfection; Aryaman is the master of the sacrificial action who offers this sevenfold working to the godheads of the Divine Birth. Aryaman within us develops our various forms

of birth in the ascending planes of our existence by which the Fathers climbed, travellers on his path, and by which it must be the aspiration of the Aryan soul to climb, to the highest summit of Immortality.

Thus Aryaman sums up in himself the whole aspiration and movement of man in a continual self-enlargement and self-transcendence to his divine perfection. By his continuous movement on the unbroken path Mitra and Varuna and the sons of Aditi fulfil themselves in the human birth.

BHAGA

The goal of the path is the divine beatitude, the illimitable joy of the Truth, of the infinity of our being. Bhaga is the godhead who brings this joy and supreme felicity into the human consciousness; he is the divine enjoyer in man. All being has this divine enjoyment of existence for its aim and end, whether it seeks for it with knowledge or with ignorance, with the divine strength or the weakness of our yet undeveloped powers. "On Bhaga the strong calls for his increasing, on Bhaga he who has not the strength; then he moves towards the Delight." "Let us call in the Dawn on Bhaga strong and victorious, the son of Aditi who is the wide-upholder, on whom the afflicted and the fighter and the king meditate and they say to the Enjoyer, Give us thy enjoyment." "Let it be the divine Enjoyer who possesses the enjoyment and by him let us be its possessors; to thee every man calls, O Bhaga; do thou become, O Enjoyer, the leader of our journey." An increasing and victorious felicity of the soul rejoicing in the growth of its divine possessions which gives us strength to journey on and overcome till we reach the goal of our perfection in an infinite beatitude, this is the sign of the birth of Bhaga in man and this his divine function.

All enjoyment comes indeed from Bhaga Savitri, the mortal as well as the divine; "creating a wide and vast force he brings forth for men their mortal enjoyment." But the Vedic ideal is the inclusion of all life and all joy, divine and human, the wideness and plenty of earth and the vastness and abundance of heaven,

the treasures of the mental, vital, physical existence uplifted, purified, perfected in the form of the infinite and divine Truth. It is this all-including felicity which is the gift of Bhaga. The Enjoyer is to be called on by men because he has many riches and ordains perfectly all delights, — the thrice seven delights upheld by him in the being of his mother Aditi. It is by creating in us "the wide and vast force", it is when the Divine as Bhaga, Pushan, Aditi, the infinite, the undivided puts on the radiances of the infinite consciousness like a robe and distributes without division all desirable boons that divine felicity comes to us in its fullness. Then he gives to the human being full enjoyment of that greatest delight. Therefore Vasishtha cries to him, "O Bhaga, our leader, Bhaga who hast the wealth of the Truth, giving unto us, raise up and increase, O Bhaga, this thought in us," — the Truth-thought by which the felicity is attained.

Bhaga is Savitri the Creator, he who brings forth from the unmanifest Divine the truth of a divine universe, dispelling from us the evil dream of this lower consciousness in which we falter amidst a confused tangle of truth and falsehood, strength and weakness, joy and suffering. An infinite being delivered out of imprisoning limits, an infinite knowledge and strength receiving in thought and working out in will a divine Truth, an infinite beatitude possessing and enjoying all without division, fault or sin, this is the creation of Bhaga Savitri, this that greatest Delight. "This creation of the divine Creator goddess Aditi speaketh forth to us, this the all-kings Varuna and Mitra and Aryaman with one mind and heart." The four Kings find themselves fulfilled with their infinite Mother by the delightful perfection in man of Bhaga the Enjoyer, the youngest and greatest of them all. Thus is the divine creation of the fourfold Savitri founded on Varuna, combined and guided by Mitra, achieved by Aryaman, enjoyed in Bhaga: Aditi the infinite Mother realises herself in the human being by the birth and works of her glorious children.

The First Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE LORDS OF THE THOUSAND-PILLARED HOME OF TRUTH AND BLISS

[The Rishi hymns the eternal and immutable Truth of which the Truth in mutable things is the veil; that is the goal of the journey of the manifested Sun of divine knowledge; it is the eternal unity of all things that are and the supreme Divine of which the Gods are various forms. Into it unite all the wealth of being and knowledge and power and bliss won by the sacrifice. It is the large vastness of the wide purities of Varuna and of the shining harmonies of Mitra. There, eternally stable, dwell the herds of the divine radiances of knowledge; for that is the happy field to which they here are travelling. The Impeller of the cosmic movement and journey pours out knowledge in us, the milk of the herds, by the dawns of the inner light and there descend the streams of the immortal existence followed by the single and perfect movement of Mitra-Varuna, the Light and the Purity, the Harmony and the Infinity. It is the rain of heaven which these two Godheads pour down, upholding the physical existence in its fruits and the celestial in its herding radiances of illumination. They thus create in man a force full of divine knowledge and a wide being which they guard and increase, a strewn seat for the sacrifice. This thousand-pillared force of knowledge they make a home for themselves and dwell there in the revelations of the Word. It is luminous in its form and its pillars of life have an iron strength and stability. They ascend to it in the dawning, in the rising of the Sun of knowledge and look with that eye of their divine vision on the infinite existence and the finite, the indivisible unity of things and their multiplicity. It is a home full and large with the sweetness and ecstasy of the supreme and inviolable peace and bliss which by their cherishing

and fostering protection we seek to conquer and possess.]

ऋतेन ऋतमपिहितं ध्रुवं वां सूर्यस्य यत्र विमुचन्त्यश्वान् ।
दश शता सह तस्थुस्तदेकं देवानां श्रेष्ठं वपुषामपश्यम् ॥१॥

1. By the Truth[1] is veiled that ever-standing Truth of yours where they unyoke the horses of the Sun;[2] there the ten hundreds[3] stand still together; That One, — I have beheld the greatest of the embodied gods.[4]

तत्सु वां मित्रावरुणा महित्वमीर्मा तस्थुषीरहभिर्दुदुह्रे ।
विश्वाः पिन्वथः स्वसरस्य धेना अनु वामेकः पविरा ववर्त ॥२॥

2. That is the utter vastness of you, O Mitra and Varuna; there the Lord of the movement milks the herds of his stable radiances by the days. Lo, you twain swell all the streams of the Blissful One and your one wheel[5] moves in their path.

अधारयतं पृथिवीमुत द्यां मित्रराजाना वरुणा महोभिः ।
वर्धयतमोषधीः पिन्वतं गा अव वृष्टिं सृजतं जीरदानू ॥३॥

3. You uphold earth and heaven, O Mitra King and King Varuna, by your greatnesses; you increase the growths of earth, you nourish the shining herds of heaven, you pour forth the rain of its waters, O swift in strength.

[1] The active cosmic Truth of things diffused and arranged in their mutability and divisibility of Time and Space veils the eternal and unchanging Truth of which it is a manifestation.

[2] The eternal Truth is the goal of the divine Light which arises in us and journeys upward into higher and higher heavens through the shining upper ocean.

[3] The entire plenitude of the divine wealth in its outpourings of knowledge, force and joy.

[4] The One, the Deva veiled by his form of the divine Sun. Cf. Isha Upanishad, "That splendour which is thy fairest form, O Sun, that let me behold. The Purusha who is there and there, He am I."

[5] The unified movement, when the lower wheel of the Sun is struck away; the inferior truth is taken up into the unity of the higher truth from which it now seems to be separate in its motion.

आ वामश्वासः सुयुजो वहन्तु यतरश्मय उप यन्त्वर्वाक् ।
घृतस्य निर्णिगनु वर्तते वामुप सिन्धवः प्रदिवि क्षरन्ति ॥ ४ ॥

4. Let horses perfectly yoked with their well-governed reins of light bear you down to us; the form of the clarity follows in your coming and the Rivers flow in the front of heaven.

अनु श्रुताममतिं वर्धदुर्वीं बर्हिरिव यजुषा रक्षमाणा ।
नमस्वन्ता धृतदक्षाधि गर्ते मित्रासाथे वरुणेळास्वन्तः ॥ ५ ॥

5. Increasing the strength that comes to our ear of knowledge, guarding by the sacrificial word[6] your wide realm[7] as if our seat of sacrifice, bringing obeisance, holding fast to judgment, you take your seat in your home, O Mitra, within the revealings of knowledge, O Varuna.

अक्रविहस्ता सुकृते परस्पा यं त्रासाथे वरुणेळास्वन्तः ।
राजाना क्षत्रमहृणीयमाना सहस्रस्थूणं बिभृथः सह द्वौ ॥ ६ ॥

6. With hands that spare not, protectors of the beyond for the doer of perfect works whom you deliver and he dwells within the revealings of knowledge, kings free from passion, together you uphold a thousand-pillared strength.

हिरण्यनिर्णिगयो अस्य स्थूणा वि भ्राजते दिव्यश्वाजनीव ।
भद्रे क्षेत्रे निमिता तिल्विले वा सनेम मध्वो अधिगर्त्यस्य ॥ ७ ॥

7. Its form is of golden light, iron is its pillar and shines in heaven as if the swift lightning;[8] in the happy field[9] it is shaped or in the field of the gleaming.[10] May we win possession of the sweet honey[11] which is in that home.

6 Yajur. The Rik is the word which brings with it the illumination, the Yajur the word which guides the sacrificial action in accordance with the Rik.

7 Or, "increasing and guarding the wide strength".

8 Or, "the Mare", the energy of the Horse of Life.

9 The Ananda, the Bliss-World.

10 The field of the gleaming of the Dawns, the world of the Light.

11 Madhu, the Soma.

हिरण्यरूपमुषसो व्युष्टावयःस्थूणमुदिता सूर्यस्य ।
आ रोहथो वरुण मित्र गर्तमतश्चक्षाथे अदितिं दितिं च ॥ ८॥

8. To that home whose form is of the gold, whose pillars are of the iron, in the breaking of the Dawn, in the uprising of the Sun you ascend, O Varuna, O Mitra, and thence you behold the Infinite and the Finite.[12]

यद् बंहिष्ठं नातिविधे सुदानू अच्छिद्रं शर्म भुवनस्य गोपा ।
तेन नो मित्रावरुणावविष्टं सिषासन्तो जिगीवांसः स्याम ॥ ९॥

9. That bliss of yours which is most large and full and without a gap, O strong guardians of the world, so that none can pierce through and beyond it, by that cherish us, Mitra and Varuna; may we be victorious, who would take possession of that peace.

12 Aditi and Diti.

The Second Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE GIVERS OF THE RAIN

[Mitra and Varuna are by their united universality and harmony the guardians of the divine Truth and its divine Law eternally perfect in the ether of our supreme being; thence they rain down the abundance of the heavens and its bliss upon the favoured soul. Seers in man of that world of Truth, as they are by their guardianship of its law rulers of all this becoming, they give us its rain of spiritual wealth and immortality. The Life-powers range with the voice of the truth-seeking thought through earth and heaven and the two Kings come to their cry with the brilliant clouds full of the creative waters. It is by the Maya, the divine truth-knowledge of the Lord, that they thus rain down heaven; that divine knowledge is the Sun, the Light, the weapon of Mitra and Varuna ranging abroad to destroy the ignorance. At first the Sun, the body of the Truth, is concealed in the very storm of its outpourings and only the sweetness of their streaming into the life is felt; but the Maruts as Life-Powers and Thought-Powers range abroad seeking in all the worlds of our being for the brilliant rays of the concealed knowledge to be gathered as a shining wealth; the voice of the Rain is full of the flashings of the Light and the movement of the divine Waters; its clouds become robes for the Life-Powers. Through it all by the formative knowledge of the mighty Master of Truth and by the law of the Truth, the two kings maintain the divine workings in us, governing by the Truth all our being, and finally set in its sky the Sun, now revealed, as a chariot of the richly varied splendours of the knowledge, the chariot of the journey of the spirit to the highest heavens.]

ऋतस्य गोपावधि तिष्ठथो रथं सत्यधर्माणा परमे व्योमनि ।
यमत्र मित्रावरुणावथो युवं तस्मै वृष्टिर्मधुमत्पिन्वते दिवः ॥१॥

1. Guardians of the Truth, you ascend your car and the law of the Truth is yours in the supreme ether.[1] He whom here you cherish, Masters of the wideness and the harmony, for him increases full of the honey the rain of heaven.

सम्राजावस्य भुवनस्य राजथो मित्रावरुणा विदथे स्वर्दृशा ।
वृष्टिं वां राधो अमृतत्वमीमहे द्यावापृथिवी वि चरन्ति तन्यवः ॥२॥

2. Emperors,[2] you rule over this world of our becoming, O Mitra and Varuna, in the getting of knowledge you are seers of the realm of Light; we desire from you the rain, the felicitous wealth, the immortality, and lo! the Thunderers[3] range abroad through earth and heaven.

सम्राजा उग्रा वृषभा दिवस्पती पृथिव्या मित्रावरुणा विचर्षणी ।
चित्रेभिरभ्रैरुप तिष्ठथो रवं द्यां वर्षयथो असुरस्य मायया ॥३॥

3. Emperors, strong Bulls of the abundance, Masters of earth and heaven, O Mitra and Varuna, universal in your workings, you approach their cry with your clouds of varied light and you rain down Heaven by the power of the knowledge[4] of the Mighty One.[5]

1 The infinity of the superconscient being.
2 *Samrāṭ*, having perfect kingship over the subjective and objective existence.
3 The Maruts, Life-Powers and Thought-Powers who find out the light of truth for all our activities. The word may also mean formers or builders.
4 Maya, the creative knowledge-will of the Deva.
5 Asura, a word used in the Veda as in the Avesta for the Deva (Ahuramazda), but also for the gods, His manifestations; it is only in a few hymns that it is used for the dark Titans, by another and fictitious derivation, *a-sura*, the not-luminous, the not-gods.

माया वां मित्रावरुणा दिवि श्रिता सूर्यो ज्योतिश्चरति चित्रमायुधम् ।
तमभ्रेण वृष्ट्या गूहथो दिवि पर्जन्य द्रप्सा मधुमन्त ईरते ॥ ४ ॥

4. This is your knowledge, O Mitra and Varuna, that is lodged in heaven; it is the Sun, it is the Light; it ranges abroad as your rich and varied weapon. You hide it in heaven with the cloud and with the raining. O Rain, full of the honey start forth thy streamings.

रथं युञ्जते मरुतः शुभे सुखं शूरो न मित्रावरुणा गविष्टिषु ।
रजांसि चित्रा वि चरन्ति तन्यवो दिवः सम्राजा पयसा न उक्षतम् ॥ ५ ॥

5. The Life-Powers yoke their happy car for the bliss, even as might a hero for battle, O Mitra and Varuna, in their seekings for the herds of Light; thundering they range the varied worlds, and you pour out on us, rulers imperial, the water of Heaven.

वाचं सु मित्रावरुणाविरावतीं पर्जन्यश्चित्रां वदति त्विषीमतीम् ।
अभ्रा वसत मरुतः सु मायया द्यां वर्षयतमरुणामरेपसम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. O Mitra and Varuna, the Rain speaks its language[6] rich and varied and full of the light and the movement; the Life-Powers have put on your clouds for raiment. Utterly by the knowledge you rain down Heaven ruddy-shining and sinless.

धर्मणा मित्रावरुणा विपश्चिता व्रता रक्षेथे असुरस्य मायया ।
ऋतेन विश्वं भुवनं वि राजथः सूर्यमा धत्थो दिवि चित्र्यं रथम् ॥ ७ ॥

[6] Here we see the subjective sense of the thunder in the symbol of the storm; it is the outcrashing of the word of the Truth, the Shabda, as the lightning is the outflashing of its sense.

7. O Mitra and Varuna illumined in consciousness, by the Law, by the knowledge of the Mighty One you guard the workings;[7] by the Truth you govern widely all the world of our becoming; you set the Sun in heaven, a chariot of various splendour.

[7] *Vratāni*, called the Aryan or divine workings, those of the divine law of the Truth to be revealed in man. The Dasyu or un-Aryan, whether human or superhuman, is he who is void of these diviner workings, opposes them in his darkened consciousness and tries to destroy them in the world. The Lords of Darkness are therefore called Dasyus, the Destroyers.

The Third Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE LEADERS TO THE BLISSFUL HOME

[The Rishi invokes the Lords of the infinite wideness and harmony whose arms embrace the soul's highest plane of the Truth and Bliss, to extend to him those arms of awakened consciousness and knowledge, so that he may have their all-embracing delight. He aspires by the path of Mitra to the joy of his harmonies in which there is no wound nor hurt; conceiving and holding the highest by the power of the illumining word, he would aspire to an increase in that plane, the proper home of the gods. Let the two great gods create in his being that wide world of their divine strength and vastness; let them bring to him its plenitude and felicity in the dawning of the divine light and the divine force.]

वरुणं वो रिशादसमृचा मित्रं हवामहे ।
परि व्रजेव बाह्वोर्जगन्वांसा स्वर्णरम् ॥१॥

1. Varuna, destroyer of the foe, and Mitra we call to you by the word of illumination; their arms encompass the world of the power of Light[1] as if cast around the pens of the shining herds.

ता बाहवा सुचेतुना प्र यन्तमस्मा अर्चते ।
शेवं हि जार्यं वां विश्वासु क्षासु जोगुवे ॥२॥

[1] Swarnara. Swar is the solar world of the Truth and the herds are the rays of its solar illuminations, therefore it is compared to the pens of these shining Vedic cattle.

2. Stretch out your arms of awakened knowledge[2] to the human being when he chants to you the illumining word; your bliss adorable shall reach through all our earths.[3]

यन्नूनमश्यां गतिं मित्रस्य यायां पथा ।
अस्य प्रियस्य शर्मण्यहिंसानस्य सश्चिरे ॥ ३॥

3. May I go by the path of the Friend[4] that even now I may attain to the goal[5] of my journey; so men cling firmly to the bliss of that Beloved in whom there is no wounding.

युवाभ्यां मित्रावरुणोपमं धेयामृचा ।
यद्ध क्षये मघोनां स्तोतॄणां च स्पूर्धसे ॥ ४॥

4. O Mitra and Varuna, may my thought hold by the illumining word that highest which is your possession, so that it shall aspire[6] to the home of the masters of plenitude for them and for men who affirm you.

आ नो मित्र सुदीतिभिर्वरुणश्च सधस्थ आ ।
स्वे क्षये मघोनां सखीनां च वृधसे ॥ ५॥

5. O Mitra, come to us with thy perfect givings and Varuna in the world of our session, for increase in their own home of the masters of plenitude[7] and for increase of your companions.

[2] The epithet shows how entirely symbolic are the bodies and members of the Gods as well as their other physical belongings, weapons, chariots, horses.
[3] All the planes of our being.
[4] Mitra, who creates the perfect and unhurt harmonies of our higher, divine existence.
[5] *Gati.* The word is still used for the spiritual or supraterrestrial status gained by man's conduct or efforts upon earth. But it may also mean the movement to the goal or the way, "May I even now attain to the Way, go by the path of Mitra."
[6] That is, manifesting in men it shall strive to raise them up to its own proper station, the Truth-plane.
[7] The gods. Swar is the "own house" of the Gods.

युवं नो येषु वरुण क्षत्रं बृहच्च बिभृथः ।
उरु णो वाजसातये कृतं राये स्वस्तये ॥ ६॥

6. For in them you twain bring to us, O Varuna, the might[8] and the vastness; form in us the wide world for the conquest of our plenitudes, for bliss, for our soul's happiness.

उच्छन्त्यां मे यजता देवक्षत्रे रुशद्गवि ।
सुतं सोमं न हस्तिभिरा पड्भिर्धावतं नरा बिभ्रतावर्चनानसम् ॥ ७॥

7. To me, O lords of sacrifice, in the breaking of the dawn, in the flashing of the ray, in the force of the gods, to my wine pressed out as if[9] by men with hands come racing with your trampling steeds, O gods who bring, — to the pilgrim of the Light.[10]

[8] The divine force of the Truth-conscious being, called in the next verse "the force of the gods"; the Vast, *bṛhat*, is the constant description of that plane or "wide world", — the Truth, the Right, the Vast.

[9] "As if", — showing, as often, that the wine and its pressing are figures and symbols.

[10] *Arcanānas*, he who travels to the illumination created by the word, the significant name of the Rishi of this hymn, one of the line of Atri.

The Fourth Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE LORDS OF THE JOURNEY

[The Rishi invokes the two great increasers of the truth in our being to lead us in our journey to the plenitudes, to the vastness of our true existence which they conquer for us out of the narrow limits of our present ignorant and imperfect mentality.]

यश्चिकेत स सुक्रतुर्देवत्रा स ब्रवीतु नः ।
वरुणो यस्य दर्शतो मित्रो वा वनते गिरः ॥१॥

1. He who has awakened to the knowledge, becomes perfect in will; let him speak for us among the gods: Varuna of the vision and Mitra take delight in his words.

ता हि श्रेष्ठवर्चसा राजाना दीर्घश्रुत्तमा ।
ता सत्पती ऋतावृध ऋतावाना जनेजने ॥२॥

2. They are the Kings most glorious in light and most far in their hearing;[1] they are the masters of being in creature and creature and the increasers of the Truth in us, for the Truth is theirs.

ता वामियानोऽवसे पूर्वा उप ब्रुवे सचा ।
स्वश्वासः सु चेतुना वाजाँ अभि प्र दावने ॥३॥

3. Travelling on the path I call to them, the twain together, the ancient and first; with perfect steeds[2] as we travel we

[1] They have the divine sight and the divine hearing, the Light and the Word.
[2] As usual, the symbol of the dynamic energies, life-powers, etc., by which our will and works and aspiration proceed.

call to them, the perfect in knowledge, for the giving of the plenitudes.

मित्रो अंहोश्चिदादुरु क्षयाय गातुं वनते ।
मित्रस्य हि प्रतूर्वतः सुमतिरस्ति विधतः ॥ ४॥

4. Even out of our narrow existence Mitra conquers for us the vastness, he conquers the path to our home; for the perfect mind[3] is of Mitra when he harmonises all and hastens forward through to the goal.

वयं मित्रस्यावसि स्याम सप्रथस्तमे ।
अनेहसस्त्वोतयः सत्रा वरुणशेषसः ॥ ५॥

5. May we abide in the increasing of Mitra which gives us our perfect breadth; then are we free from hurt and sin, fostered by thee, children of the Lord of Wideness.

युवं मित्रेमं जनं यतथः सं च नयथः ।
मा मघोनः परि ख्यतं मो अस्माकमृषीणां गोपीथे न उरुष्यतम् ॥ ६॥

6. You twain, O Mitra, set this human creature travelling on your path and wholly you lead him. Set not your hedge around our lords of plenitude and our seers of the truth. Guard us in our drinking of the light.[4]

[3] *Aṁhoḥ*, the narrowness full of suffering and evil, is the unenlightened state of our limited mentality; the perfect mentality, *sumati*, given by the grace of Mitra admits us to the wideness.

[4] *Go*, the Light or the Cow, meaning here the "milk" or yield of the Mother of Light.

The Fifth Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE GIVERS OF SELF-RULE

[The Rishi invokes Varuna, the vast form of the Truth, and Mitra the beloved, godhead of its harmonies and large bliss, who conquer for us the perfect force of our true and infinite being, to change our imperfect human nature into the image of their divine workings. Then the solar Heaven of the Truth is manifested within us, its wide pasture of herding illuminations becomes the field of journeying of our chariots, the high thoughts of the seers, their purified discernment, their rapid inspirations become ours, our very earth becomes the world of that vast Truth. For then there is the perfect movement, the transcendence of this darkness of sin and suffering. We arrive at self-empire, a rich, full and vast possession of our infinite being.]

आ चिकितान सुक्रतू देवौ मर्त रिशादसा ।
वरुणाय ऋतपेशसे दधीत प्रयसे महे ॥ १ ॥

1. O mortal who awakenest to knowledge, call to thee the two godheads who are perfect in will and destroyers of thy enemy. Direct your thoughts to Varuna of whom Truth is the form and to the great Delight.[1]

ता हि क्षत्रमविह्रुतं सम्यगसुर्यमाशाते ।
अध व्रतेव मानुषं स्वर्ण धायि दर्शतम् ॥ २ ॥

[1] The satisfaction given by Mitra, founding the large bliss of the Truth-plane. Varuna of the infinities gives the wide form, Mitra of the harmonies the perfect joy of the energies of the Truth, its complete mightiness.

2. For it is they who attain to the undistorted force and the entire mightiness. Then shall thy humanity become as if the workings of these gods; it is as if the visible heaven of light[2] were founded in thee.

ता वामेषे रथानामुर्वीं गव्यूतिमेषाम् ।
रातहव्यस्य सुष्टुतिं दधृक्स्तोमैर्मनामहे ॥ ३ ॥

3. Therefore you, O gods, I desire, — for the rushing of these chariots your wide pasture of the herds. Forcefully by our hymns our minds seize on his perfect affirmation when the god receives our bounteous offerings.

अधा हि काव्या युवं दक्षस्य पूर्भिरद्भुता ।
नि केतुना जनानां चिकेथे पूतदक्षसा ॥ ४ ॥

4. Then indeed, O transcendent godheads, you conquer the seer-wisdoms by the full floodings of the illumined discernment; you perceive knowledge for these human creatures by a perception in which the judgment is purified.

तदृतं पृथिवि बृहच्छ्रवएष ऋषीणाम् ।
ज्रयसानावरं पृथ्वति क्षरन्ति यामभिः ॥ ५ ॥

5. O wide Earth, that Vast, that Truth for the movement of inspired knowledge of the sages! Widely the Twain speed with full capacity, our chariots pass streaming beyond[3] in their travellings.

आ यद्वामीयचक्षसा मित्र वयं च सूरयः ।
व्यचिष्ठे बहुपाय्ये यतेमहि स्वराज्ये ॥ ६ ॥

2 Or Swar of the vision, the world of light where is the full vision of the Truth.
3 Beyond the darkness and the enemies, the suffering and evil of the lower existence.

6. When, O Mitra, you have your far-voyaging vision and we are the illumined seers, may we arrive in the effort of our journey to a self-empire[4] spread out widely open and governing its multitudes.

[4] Swarajya. Swarajya and Samrajya, perfect empire within and without, rule of our inner being and mastery of our environment and circumstances, was the ideal of the Vedic sages, attainable only by ascending beyond our mortal mentality to the luminous Truth of our being, the supramental infinities on the spiritual plane of our existence.

The Sixth Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE TWIN UPHOLDERS AND PROTECTORS

[Mitra and Varuna perfect the vastness of the superconscient being which is the object of sacrifice; they possess the full abundance of its force. When they reach that luminous origin and home, they give men, labourers in the sacrificial work, its peace and bliss; on the way to it they protect the mortal from his spiritual enemies who would stand in the way of his immortality; for they keep firm to their higher workings and to the seats of the higher consciousness to which those workings belong and to which man rises in his ascent; universal and all-knowing they destroy these enemies who are the forces of egoism and limiting ignorance. True in their being, they are the powers that possess and touch the Truth in each individual being; leaders of the journey and the battle they create the wideness of that higher consciousness even out of our narrow and distressed mortality. It is that highest which the thought in the Atris desires and reaches to by affirming Mitra, Varuna and Aryaman, the godheads, in the "bodies" inhabited by the human soul.]

बळित्था देव निष्कृतमादित्या यजतं बृहत् ।
वरुण मित्रार्यमन्वर्षिष्ठं क्षत्रमाशाथे ॥१॥

1. In truth, O godheads, ye two sons of the infinite Mother, rightly perfected by you is the Vastness for which we sacrifice. O Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman, you possess its most abundant force.

आ यद्योनिं हिरण्ययं वरुण मित्र सदथः ।
धर्तारा चर्षणीनां यन्तं सुम्नं रिशादसा ॥२॥

2. When you enter into your original home of golden light, O Varuna, O Mitra, upholders of men in their labour, destroyers of the enemy, reach for them the bliss.

विश्वे हि विश्ववेदसो वरुणो मित्रो अर्यमा ।
व्रता पदेव सश्चिरे पान्ति मर्त्यं रिषः ॥ ३॥

3. Universal and all-knowing are Varuna and Mitra and Aryaman; they keep firm to the law of their workings, even as to the seats to which they arrive, and guard mortal man from his foes.

ते हि सत्या ऋतस्पृश ऋतावानो जनेजने ।
सुनीथासः सुदानवोंऽहोश्चिदुरुचक्रयः ॥ ४॥

4. For because they are true in their being, they touch the Truth and hold the Truth in creature and creature; perfect leaders in the journey, perfect in force for the battle, they create the wideness even out of this narrow being.

को नु वां मित्रास्तुतो वरुणो वा तनूनाम् ।
तत्सु वामेषते मतिरत्रिभ्य एषते मतिः ॥ ५॥

5. Which of you, O Mitra, is unaffirmed, thou or Varuna, in our bodies?[1] Wholly our thought seeks That from you, That for the Enjoyers[2] our Thought desires.

1 Not the physical body only; the soul dwells here in five sheaths or embodyings.
2 The Atris, — literally, eaters; the word may also mean Travellers.

The Seventh Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE LORDS OF THE GREAT FORCE

[Because they hold the great battle-force of the Truth, Mitra and Varuna lead us to the vastness of that Truth. By that force they rule all imperially, contain the Truth's clarities and their powers are manifested in all the godheads. Therefore should they put forth their power in these godheads for the human possession of the great felicity and wealth of the Truth in earth and heaven. They reach the Truth by the Truth; for they have its discernment full of the impulsion that goes straight to the knowledge; therefore they increase divinely without falling into the harms of the Ignorance. As lords of that powerful impulsion they bring down the heavens in a luminous rain upon the mortal and take possession of the vast as a home.]

प्र वो मित्राय गायत वरुणाय विपा गिरा ।
महिक्षत्रावृतं बृहत् ॥ १॥

1. Sing ye to Mitra and Varuna with the word that enlightens; because they have that great force, theirs is the Truth, the Vast.

सम्राजा या घृतयोनी मित्रश्चोभा वरुणश्च ।
देवा देवेषु प्रशस्ता ॥ २॥

2. All-rulers are they, yes, both of them, Mitra and Varuna, homes of the clarity, gods, manifested by the word in the gods.

ता नः शक्तं पार्थिवस्य महो रायो दिव्यस्य ।
महि वां क्षत्रं देवेषु ॥ ३॥

3. Therefore put forth strength for our great felicity[1] heavenly and earthly; for great is your force in the gods.

ऋतमृतेन सपन्तेषिरं दक्षमाशाते ।
अद्रुहा देवौ वर्धेते ॥ ४ ॥

4. By the Truth you attain knowledge of the Truth, you possess a judgment of impelling force;[2] O gods, you grow and come not to hurt.

वृष्टिद्यावा रीत्यापेषस्पती दानुमत्याः ।
बृहन्तं गर्तमाशाते ॥ ५ ॥

5. Turning heaven to rain, winners of the streaming movement, masters of that forceful impulsion, you take possession of your vast home.

[1] The felicity or happy wealth of the wide Truth-consciousness manifested not only in the higher mental planes of our consciousness, but in our physical being.

[2] The straight impulsion which the gods possess; man, moving from the ignorance to the Truth by the ignorance, follows a crooked and wavering movement, has a judgment distressed by the falsehood and in his growth stumbles constantly into sin and suffering. By the growth of the gods in him, he is able to move without stumbling and suffering from Truth to greater Truth, straight, felicitously.

The Eighth Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE HOLDERS OF THE LUMINOUS WORLDS

[The Rishi invokes Mitra and Varuna as the upholders of the worlds or planes of being, especially the three luminous worlds in which the triple mental, the triple vital, the triple physical find the light of their truth and the divine law of their powers. The strength of the Aryan warrior is increased by them and guarded in that imperishable law. From the luminous worlds the rivers of the truth descend with their yield of bliss. In each of them a luminous Purusha fertilises a form of the triple thought-consciousness of the Truth; these, which make the luminous day of the soul, found in man the divine and infinite consciousness and in that the divine peace and the activity by which in the extended universality of our being there is the rich felicity and the creation of the godhead. The divine workings are impaired and restricted by the gods in the ordinary life of the vital and the physical being, but when Mitra and Varuna uphold in us the luminous worlds in which each of these finds its truth and power, they become complete and firm for ever.]

त्री रोचना वरुण त्रीँरुत द्यून् त्रीणि मित्र धारयथो रजांसि ।
वावृधानावमतिं क्षत्रियस्याऽनु व्रतं रक्षमाणावजुर्यम् ॥ १ ॥

1. Three worlds of the Light you two uphold, O Varuna, three heavens, three mid-worlds, O Mitra, and you increase the might of the Warrior and guard him in the imperishable law of your working.

इरावतीर्वरुण धेनवो वां मधुमद् वां सिन्धवो मित्र दुह्रे ।
त्रयस्तस्थुर्वृषभासस्तिसृणां धिषणानां रेतोधा वि द्युमन्तः ॥ २ ॥

2. Your fostering cows[1] have their streams, O Varuna, O Mitra, the rivers milk out their honeyed yield. There stand wide three luminous Bulls[2] and cast their seed into the three Thoughts.

प्रातर्देवीमदितिं जोहवीमि मध्यंदिन उदिता सूर्यस्य ।
राये मित्रावरुणा सर्वतातेळे तोकाय तनयाय शं योः ॥ ३॥

3. In the dawn I call to the divine Mother infinite, in the mid-day and at the rising of the sun. I desire of Mitra and Varuna the peace and the movement in the forming of the all[3] for felicity and for the creation and the begetting.[4]

या धर्तारा रजसो रोचनस्योतादित्या दिव्या पार्थिवस्य ।
न वां देवा अमृता आ मिनन्ति व्रतानि मित्रावरुणा ध्रुवाणि ॥ ४॥

4. Because you are the upholders of the luminous sphere of the mid-world and the luminous sphere of the earth, O divine Sons of Infinity, O Mitra and Varuna, the immortal gods impair not your workings which are firm for ever.[5]

[1] *Dhenavaḥ*, the rivers of the Truth, as *gāvaḥ*, the luminous cows, are the rays of its light.

[2] The Bull is the Purusha, soul or conscious being; the Cow is the Prakriti, the power of consciousness. The creation of the godhead, the Son, comes by the fertilising of the triple luminous consciousness by the triple luminous soul of the Truth-being so that that higher consciousness becomes active, creative and fruitful in man.

[3] The action of the sacrifice consists in the formation or "extension" of the universal being, *sarvatāti*, and of the divine being, *devatāti*.

[4] Of the Son, the godhead created within the humanity.

[5] That is, in the ordinary workings of the life-plane and the material plane, because they are unilluminated, full of ignorance and defect, the law of our divine and infinite being is impaired or spoiled, works under restrictions and with perversions; it manifests fully, steadfastly and faultlessly only when the ideal, supramental truth-plane is upheld in us by the pure wideness and harmony of Varuna and Mitra and takes up the vital and the physical consciousness into its power and light.

The Ninth Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

THE INCREASERS OF BEING AND DELIVERERS

[The Rishi desires the wide and multiple fostering of our being and its powers which Varuna and Mitra give and their complete impulsion of our strength towards the perfect foundation of the divine status. He prays to them to protect and deliver him from the Destroyers and prevent their adverse control from impairing the growth of the godhead in our various sheaths or bodies.]

पुरूरुणा चिद्ध्यस्त्यवो नूनं वां वरुण ।
मित्र वंसि वां सुमतिम् ॥१॥

1. Multiple indeed by the wideness[1] is now your fostering of our being, O Varuna. O Mitra, I would enjoy your perfect-mindedness.

ता वां सम्यगद्रुह्वाणेषमश्याम धायसे ।
वयं ते रुद्रा स्याम ॥२॥

2. You are they who betray not to harm;[2] may we enjoy your complete force of impulsion for our founding; may we be they, O you violent godheads.

पातं नो रुद्रा पायुभिरुत त्रायेथां सुत्रात्रा ।
तुर्याम दस्यून् तनूभिः ॥३॥

[1] The wideness of the infinite Truth-plane with the manifold wealth of its spiritual contents. Its condition is the perfection of the thought-mind and psychic mentality proper to a divine nature, which comes to man as the grace of the gods, *sumati*.
[2] The harms of the Dasyus, destroyers of our being and enemies of its divine progress, the sons of Limitation and Ignorance.

3. Protect us, O violent ones,[3] with your protectings and deliver us with a perfect deliverance. May we in our embodyings break through the Destroyers.

मा कस्याद्भुतक्रतू यक्षं भुजेमा तनूभिः ।
मा शेषसा मा तनसा ॥ ४ ॥

4. O transcendent in will-power, let us not in our embodyings suffer the control of any,[4] nor in our begetting, nor our creation.

[3] Rudras. Rudra is the Divine as the master of our evolution by violence and battle, smiting and destroying the Sons of Darkness and the evil they create in man. Varuna and Mitra as helpers in the upward struggle against the Dasyus assume this Rudrahood.
[4] That is, any of the Destroyers.

The Tenth Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

AN INVOCATION TO THE SACRIFICE

[The Rishi invokes Mitra and Varuna to the Soma offering as destroyers of the enemy and greateners of our being and as helpers of our thoughts by their mastery and wisdom.]

आ नो गन्तं रिशादसा वरुण मित्र बर्हणा ।
उपेमं चारुमध्वरम् ॥१॥

1. O destroyers of the Enemy, come with your greatenings,[1] O Varuna, O Mitra, to this our delightful sacrifice.

विश्वस्य हि प्रचेतसा वरुण मित्र राजथः ।
ईशाना पिप्यतं धियः ॥२॥

2. O Varuna, O Mitra, you govern every man and are the wise thinkers; you are the rulers, nourish our thoughts.

उप नः सुतमा गतं वरुण मित्र दाशुषः ।
अस्य सोमस्य पीतये ॥३॥

3. Come, O Varuna, O Mitra, to our Soma offering, to the sacrifice of the giver, that you may drink of this wine.

[1] By destroying the enemy, the hurters, who pervert and diminish our being, will and knowledge, they increase in us the largenesses proper to the "vast Truth". When they govern, the control of the Dasyus is removed and the knowledge of the Truth increases in our thoughts.

The Eleventh Hymn to Mitra-Varuna

AN INVOCATION TO THE SACRIFICE

[The Rishi invokes Mitra and Varuna to the sacrifice as the godheads who lead man on the path according to the law of the truth and confirm our spiritual gains by its workings.]

आ मित्रे वरुणे वयं गीर्भिर्जुहुमो अत्रिवत् ।
नि बर्हिषि सदतं सोमपीतये ॥ १॥

1. With the words we sacrifice to Mitra and to Varuna as the Atri.
   Sit on the seat of the largeness for the drinking of the wine.

व्रतेन स्थो ध्रुवक्षेमा धर्मणा यातयज्जना ।
नि बर्हिषि सदतं सोमपीतये ॥ २॥

2. By your working you keep firm the gettings of good and you make men to walk the path by your law.
   Sit on the seat of the largeness for the drinking of the wine.

मित्रश्च नो वरुणश्च जुषेतां यज्ञमिष्टये ।
नि बर्हिषि सदतां सोमपीतये ॥ ३॥

3. May Mitra and Varuna take delight in our sacrifice that we may have our desire.
   Sit on the seat of the largeness for the drinking of the wine.

Hymn to Varuna

[In this hymn there is throughout a sustained double sense. In the exoteric Varuna is hymned as the Asura, omniscient and omnipotent lord and creator, the Godhead in his creative wisdom and might forming the world and maintaining the law of things in the earth and mid-air and heavens. In the esoteric, in which the physical phenomena of the exoteric become symbols, the infinite Godhead is hymned in his all-pervading wisdom and purity opening the three worlds of our being to the Sun of knowledge, pouring down the streams of the Truth, purifying the soul from the falsehood of the lower being and its sin. The hymn is rendered here successively in its exoteric and its esoteric significance.]

(1)

TO THE OMNISCIENT CREATOR

प्र सम्राजे बृहदर्चा गभीरं ब्रह्म प्रियं वरुणाय श्रुताय ।
वि यो जघान शमितेव चर्मोपस्तिरे पृथिवीं सूर्याय ॥१॥

1. Sing thou the word vast and profound and dear to renowned Varuna, the All-ruler, to him who clove away, even as the cleaver of beasts a skin, that he might spread out the earth under the sun.

वनेषु व्यन्तरिक्षं ततान वाजमर्वत्सु पय उस्रियासु ।
हृत्सु क्रतुं वरुणो अप्स्वग्निं दिवि सूर्यमदधात्सोममद्रौ ॥२॥

2. He spread out the mid-air on the tree-tops, he put strength in

the battle-steeds and milk in the cows; in hearts he put will, the fire in the waters,[1] the sun in heaven and the Soma-plant on the mountain.

नीचीनबारं वरुणः कवन्धं प्र ससर्ज रोदसी अन्तरिक्षम् ।
तेन विश्वस्य भुवनस्य राजा यवं न वृष्टिर्व्युनत्ति भूम ॥ ३॥

3. Varuna poured forth over earth and heaven and the mid-air the holder of the waters whose windows open downward; by him the King of all the world floods the earth as the rain floods a field of barley.

उनत्ति भूमिं पृथिवीमुत द्यां यदा दुग्धं वरुणो वष्ट्यादित् ।
समभ्रेण वसत पर्वतासस्तविषीयन्तः श्रथयन्त वीराः ॥ ४॥

4. Varuna floods the wide earth and heaven, yea, when he desires the milk of heaven, he pours it forth; the mountains are clothed utterly with cloud, the heroes of storm[2] put forth their strength and all is cast down before them.

इमामू ष्वासुरस्य श्रुतस्य महीं मायां वरुणस्य प्र वोचम् ।
मानेनेव तस्थिवाँ अन्तरिक्षे वि यो ममे पृथिवीं सूर्येण ॥ ५॥

5. I have declared this vast creative wisdom[3] of the famous and mighty One, even Varuna, he who stood in mid-air as with a measuring-rod and wide he measured out the earth with the sun.

इमामू नु कवितमस्य मायां महीं देवस्य नकिरा दधर्ष ।
एकं यदुद्ना न पृणन्त्येनीरासिञ्चन्तीरवनयः समुद्रम् ॥ ६॥

[1] Sayana explains, either the electric fire in the water of the clouds or the submarine fire in the ocean.
[2] *Vīrāḥ*, the Heroes, here the Maruts as storm-gods.
[3] Maya, with a strong sense of its root-significance, to measure, form, build or plan out.

6. Vast is this wisdom of the divine and the greatest of seers and there is none who can do violence against it; therefore the Ocean is one, yet all these rushing rivers pour themselves into it and cannot fill it.

अर्यम्यं वरुण मित्र्यं वा सखायं वा सदमिद् भ्रातरं वा ।
वेशं वा नित्यं वरुणारणं वा यत्सीमागश्चकृमा शिश्रथस्तत् ॥ ७ ॥

7. Whatsoever sin we have done against the law of Aryaman or the law of Mitra, against brother or friend, against constant neighbour or enemy,[4] cast it away from us, O Varuna.

कितवासो यद्रिरिपुर्न दीवि यद्वा घा सत्यमुत यन्न विद्म ।
सर्वा ता वि ष्य शिथिरेव देवाऽधा ते स्याम वरुण प्रियासः ॥ ८ ॥

8. The sin we have done like cunning gamesters who break the law of the play, or have done against the truth or what we have sinned in ignorance, all these cleave far from us, O god, like loose-hanging fruits: then shall we be beloved of thee, O Varuna.

(2)

THE MIGHTY MASTER OF INFINITE WISDOM

[The Rishi hymns Varuna as the Lord of infinite purity and wisdom who opens our earthly being to the unclouded light of the sun of knowledge, pours out the waters of the Truth upon all our triple existence mental, vital and physical and by its power removes all sin and evil and falsehood from our lives. He creates the free wideness of our vital being above our broken search for the delightful objects of our desire, sets the plenitude in our battling life-forces, the yield of heaven in the shining herds of

[4] Or, stranger.

thought; he has put will in our hearts, Agni the divine force in the waters of existence, the Sun of divine knowledge in the highest heaven of mind and the plant that yields the wine of delight on the many-plateaued mountain of our being. All these are the means by which we attain to immortality. He plans out all our physical existence by his wisdom according to the truth-light of the sun of knowledge and creates in us the unity of his own infinite existence and consciousness with all the seven rivers of the Truth-plane pouring their streams of knowledge into it without filling its infinity.]

1. To Varuna of the far-heard inspirations, the all-ruling,[5] sing bright the inspired word of the soul in its vastness and depth and delight; for he has cloven wide away the darkness, as one that cleaves away a skin, that he may spread out our earth under his illumining sun.[6]
2. He has spread wide the mid-world above the forests of earth-delight;[7] he has put his plenitude in our battle-steeds of life[8] and their heavenly milk in our shining herds of knowledge.[9] Varuna has put the will[10] in our hearts, the divine fire[11] in the waters,[12] the Sun of Light in our heavens, the plant of Delight on the mountain of our being.[13]
3. Varuna has poured forth over our earth and heaven and

[5] The two epithets are intended to give the two sides of the divine being, all-knowledge and all-power; *māyām āsurasya śrutasya*. Man divinising himself has to become in the image of the godhead seer and king.

[6] The limitations of the physical mentality are rolled away and it is spread out in a great wideness to receive the revelations and inspirations of the light of the gnosis.

[7] The forests or delightful growths of earth (*vana* means also pleasure) are the basis of the mid-world, the vital world in us which is the realm of Vayu, the Life-God. That is the world of the satisfaction of desires. This also is spread out in its full wideness, free from limitation, to receive the Ananda or divine delight by means of the knowledge and law of the Truth.

[8] *Arvatsu*, meaning both "battlers, strivers" and "horses".

[9] *Usriyāsu*, meaning both "bright ones" and "cows".

[10] *Kratu*, the will to the divine work, the sacrificial will.

[11] Agni, the fire of the divine Will which receives the sacrifice and becomes its priest.

[12] The ocean of being or else the waters of Truth which descend from above.

[13] Our existence is compared always to a mountain with many plateaus, each a level or plane of being.

mid-world the holder of wisdom with his doors opening downward;[14] with him the king of all our being floods our earth like rain flooding the barley.

4. He floods our earth in its wideness and our heaven, yea, Varuna when he desires that milk,[15] pours it forth; the mountains are covered with the cloud, his heroes[16] put forth their strength and cast it away.
5. Vast is this wisdom which I declare of Varuna the far-heard, the mighty Lord, for he stands in our mid-world as with a measuring-rod and wide he measures out our earth with his illumining Sun.[17]
6. Vast is this wisdom of the godhead greatest in seer-knowledge and none can do violence to it; for into him, the one, the ocean, the bright fostering rivers[18] pour their waters, yet they cannot fill him.
7. All the sin that we have done against thee in thy power of Aryaman or thy power of Mitra or as brother or friend or the eternal indweller or the warrior,[19] that cast away from us.
8. The sin we have done as cunning gamesters offend in their play, our sin against the truth and our sin by ignorance, all these cleave away like loosened things; then may we be dear to thee, O Varuna.

[14] The gnosis opens upward to receive the Infinite in its will and knowledge; here its doors open downwards to flood the lower being.

[15] The milk of the Cow Aditi, the infinite consciousness.

[16] The Maruts as life-powers attaining to full thought-knowledge; they help Indra to break the cloud or coverer, Vritra, and pour out the waters of Truth and also to bring the light hidden by Vala, that of the hidden sun. Here the two ideas are combined in another image.

[17] Man lives in the physical being; Varuna brings the light of the gnosis into it and measures it out, that is, shapes and plans out our earth-existence in the measures of the Truth by means of the mind enlightened by the sun of gnosis: he takes his stand as the Asura in our vital plane, the link between mental and physical, there to receive the light and pass it on to the earth as a creative and determining force.

[18] The seven rivers that descend from the Truth-plane, here called *avanayaḥ*, which has the same root-sense as *dhenavaḥ*, the fostering cows.

[19] Against the Dasyus.

The First Hymn to the Dawn

[The Rishi prays for the full epiphany of the Dawn of the light of Truth in all its lavish splendour, with all the bountiful companies of its gods and seers, the shining herds of its thought, the rushing steeds of its force, the luminous impulsions with which it comes — companioned, as they are, by the burning rays of the Sun of gnosis. Let the Dawn arrive and the work will no longer be long and tardy.]

> महे नो अद्य बोधयोषो राये दिवित्मती ।
> यथा चिन्नो अबोधयः सत्यश्रवसि वाय्ये सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥१॥

1. O Dawn, come with all thy splendours of heaven, awaken us today to the great felicity, even as once thou awakenedst us, — *in the sonhood of the birth of knowledge, in the inspired hearing of the Truth.*[1]
   O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

> या सुनीथे शौचद्रथे व्यौच्छो दुहितर्दिवः ।
> सा व्युच्छ सहीयसि सत्यश्रवसि वाय्ये सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥२॥

2. Thou who breakest forth into dawning, O daughter of heaven, in him who has the perfect leading of the flaming chariot of light,[2] so break forth today, — O *greater still in thy force, in the sonhood of the birth of knowledge, in the inspired hearing of the Truth.*

[1] The name of the Rishi is here a covert figure for the characteristics of the Sun-birth in man.
[2] The same figure, with another name; it gives the result of the Sun-birth.

O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

सा नो अद्याभरद्वसुर्व्युच्छा दुहितर्दिवः ।
यो व्यौच्छः सहीयसि सत्यश्रवसि वाय्ये सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ ३॥

3. Break forth into light a bearer of treasures, O daughter of heaven, as once thou brokest forth, — *O greater still in thy force, in the sonhood of the birth of knowledge, in the inspired hearing of the Truth.*
O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

अभि ये त्वा विभावरि स्तोमैर्गृणन्ति वह्नयः ।
मघैर्मघोनि सुश्रियो दामन्वन्तः सुरातयः सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ ४॥

4. There are bearers of the sacrifice[3] who bring thee out in their speech, by their hymns they manifest thee, O wide and lustrous Dawn; they are glorious with thy plenty, O queen, their gifts are lavish, their boons are full.
O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

यच्चिद्धि ते गणा इमे छदयन्ति मघत्तये ।
परि चिद्वष्टयो दधुर्ददतो राधो अह्रयं सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ ५॥

5. When these companies of thy godheads seek to pleasure thee in hope of thy plenitudes, they set their desires all around, they lavish thy undeviating felicity.
O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

[3] Not human priests, but divine powers, the hosts or companies of the Dawn, "*gaṇas*", at once priests, seers and patrons of the inner sacrifice, winners and givers of the celestial wealth.

ऐषु धा वीरवद्यश उषो मघोनि सूरिषु ।
ये नो राधांस्यह्रया मघवानो अरासत सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ ६ ॥

6. These are thy seers; O Dawn, queen of plenty, set in them the splendour of thy heroic powers; lords of thy plenty, they shall lavish on us thy undeviating riches.
O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

तेभ्यो द्युम्नं बृहद्यश उषो मघोन्या वह ।
ये नो राधांस्यश्व्या गव्या भजन्त सूरयः सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ ७ ॥

7. O Dawn, our lady of plenty, bring to them thy illumination, a vast glory; they shall give us enjoyment of the felicity of thy steeds and the felicity of thy herds.
O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

उत नो गोमतीरिष आ वहा दुहितर्दिवः ।
साकं सूर्यस्य रश्मिभिः शुक्रैः शोचद्भिरर्चिभिः सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ ८ ॥

8. Bring to us too, O daughter of heaven, powers of impulse full of the troopings of thy light; let them come companioned with the rays of thy Sun, linked with the purity of his bright and burning light-givings.
O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

व्युच्छा दुहितर्दिवो मा चिरं तनुथा अपः ।
नेत् त्वा स्तेनं यथा रिपुं तपाति सूरो अर्चिषा सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥ ९ ॥

9. Break forth into light, O daughter of heaven! And spin not out too long the work. For thee thy sun afflicts not with his

burning ray as he afflicts the foe and the thief.[4]
O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

एतावद्वेदुषस्त्वं भूयो वा दातुमर्हसि ।
या स्तोतृभ्यो विभावर्युच्छन्ती न प्रमीयसे सुजाते अश्वसूनृते ॥१०॥

10. So much thou shouldst give or more than this; for to thy adorers thou breakest forth into the full wideness of thy glories and thou art not limited in thy dawning.
O, thy birth is complete! O, truth is in the tramp of thy steeds!

4 The labour towards the being of the Truth is long and tedious, because the powers of darkness and division, the lower powers of our being, seize on and appropriate, keep idle or misuse the gains of the knowledge. They are not bearers of the sacrifice, but its spoilers; they are hurt by the full ray of the sun. But this Dawn of knowledge can bear the full illumination and bring to a rapid conclusion the great work.

The Second Hymn to the Dawn

[The Rishi hymns the divine Dawn, daughter of Heaven, as the bringer of the Truth, the bliss, the heavens of light, creator of the Light, giver of vision, maker, follower, leader of the paths of Truth, remover of the darkness, the eternal and ever youthful goddess of our godward journeying.]

द्युतद्यामानं बृहतीमृतेन ऋतावरीमरुणप्सुं विभातीम् ।
देवीमुषसं स्वरावहन्तीं प्रति विप्रासो मतिभिर्जरन्ते ॥१॥

1. Dawn of the luminous journey, Dawn queen of truth, large with the Truth, how wide is the gleam from her rosy limbs, — Dawn divine who brings with her the heaven of light! Her the seers adore with their thoughts.

एषा जनं दर्शता बोधयन्ती सुगान्पथः कृण्वती यात्यग्रे ।
बृहद्रथा बृहती विश्वमिन्वोषा ज्योतिर्यच्छत्यग्रे अह्नाम् ॥२॥

2. This is she who has the vision and she awakens man and makes his paths easy to travel and walks in his front. How large is her chariot, how vast and all-pervading the goddess, how she brings Light in the front of the days!

एषा गोभिररुणेभिर्युजानाऽस्रेधन्ती रयिमप्रायु चक्रे ।
पथो रदन्ती सुविताय देवी पुरुष्टुता विश्ववारा वि भाति ॥३॥

3. This is she who yokes her cows of rosy light; her journey does not fail and such is the treasure she makes that it passes not away. She hews out our paths to happiness; divine is she, far-shining her glory, many the hymns that rise to her, she brings with her every boon.

एषा व्येनी भवति द्विबर्हा आविष्कृण्वाना तन्वं पुरस्तात् ।
ऋतस्य पन्थामन्वेति साधु प्रजानतीव न दिशो मिनाति ॥ ४ ॥

4. Behold her in her biune energy of earth and heaven, how she comes into being in her whiteness and discloses her body in our front. She follows perfectly the paths of Truth, as one who is wise and knows, and she hedges not in our regions.

एषा शुभ्रा न तन्वो विदानोर्ध्वेव स्नाती दृशये नो अस्थात् ।
अप द्वेषो बाधमाना तमांस्युषा दिवो दुहिता ज्योतिषागात् ॥ ५ ॥

5. Lo, how brilliant is her body when she is found and known! how she stands on high as if bathing in light that we may have vision! Driving away all enemies and all darknesses Dawn, the daughter of Heaven, has come with the Light.

एषा प्रतीची दुहिता दिवो नॄन्योषेव भद्रा नि रिणीते अप्सः ।
व्यूर्ण्वती दाशुषे वार्याणि पुनर्ज्योतिर्युवतिः पूर्वथाकः ॥ ६ ॥

6. Lo, the daughter of Heaven like a woman full of happiness moves to meet the gods and her form travels ever nearer to them. Unveiling all blessings for the giver of sacrifice the goddess young for ever has created the Light once more even as in the beginning.

A Hymn to Savitri

[The Rishi hymns the Sun-God as the source of divine knowledge and the creator of the inner worlds. To him, the Seer, the seekers of light yoke their mind and thoughts; he, the one knower of all forms of knowledge, is the one supreme ordainer of the sacrifice. He assumes all forms as the robes of his being and his creative sight and creates the supreme good and happiness for the two forms of life in the worlds. He manifests the heavenly world, shining in the path of the dawn of divine knowledge; in that path the other godheads follow him and it is his greatness of light that they make the goal of all their energies. He has measured out for us our earthly worlds by his power and greatness: but it is in the three worlds of light that he attains to his real greatness of manifestation in the rays of the divine sun; then he encompasses the night of our darkness with his being and his light and becomes Mitra who by his laws produces the luminous harmony of our higher and lower worlds. Of all our creation he is the one author, and by his forward marches he is its increaser until the whole world of our becoming grows full of his illumination.]

युञ्जते मन उत युञ्जते धियो विप्रा विप्रस्य बृहतो विपश्चितः ।
वि होत्रा दधे वयुनाविदेक इन्मही देवस्य सवितुः परिष्टुतिः ॥१॥

1. The illumined yoke their mind and they yoke their thoughts to the illumined godhead, to the vast, to the luminous in consciousness; the one knower of all manifestation of knowledge, he alone orders the things of the sacrifice. Great is the praise of Savitri, the creating godhead.

विश्वा रूपाणि प्रति मुञ्चते कविः प्रासावीद् भद्रं द्विपदे चतुष्पदे ।
वि नाकमख्यत् सविता वरेण्योऽनु प्रयाणमुषसो वि राजति ॥२॥

2. All forms are robes the Seer puts on that he may create the good and bliss for the double and the quadruple[1] creature. Savitri describes by his light our heavenly world; supreme is he and desirable, wide is the light of his shining in the march of the Dawn.

यस्य प्रयाणमन्वन्य इद् ययुर्देवा देवस्य महिमानमोजसा ।
यः पार्थिवानि विममे स एतशो रजांसि देवः सविता महित्वना ॥ ३॥

3. And in that march all the other gods in their might follow after the greatness of this godhead. This is that bright god Savitri who by his power and greatness has measured out our earthly worlds of light.

उत यासि सवितस्त्रीणि रोचनोत सूर्यस्य रश्मिभिः समुच्यसि ।
उत रात्रीमुभयतः परीयस उत मित्रो भवसि देव धर्मभिः ॥ ४॥

4. But also thou goest, O Savitri, to the three shining worlds of heaven and thou art made manifest by the rays of the Sun, and thou encirclest on both sides the Night, and thou becomest Mitra, O god, with his settled laws of Truth.

उतेशिषे प्रसवस्य त्वमेक इदुत पूषा भवसि देव यामभिः ।
उतेदं विश्वं भुवनं वि राजसि श्यावाश्वस्ते सवितः स्तोममानशे ॥ ५॥

5. And thou alone hast power for the creation and thou becomest the Increaser, O god, by thy marchings in thy path, and thou illuminest all this world of the becoming. Shyavashwa, O Savitri, has found the affirmation of thy godhead.

[1] Literally, two-footed and four-footed, but *pad* also means the step, the principle on which the soul founds itself. The esoteric meaning is four-principled, those who dwell in the fourfold principle of the lower world, and two-principled, those who dwell in the double principle of the divine and the human.

Part Four

Other Hymns

A Vedic Hymn

Rig Veda VII.60

O Sun, O Light, because today blameless in thy rising thou hast declared the Truth to the Lord of Love and the Lord of Purity, so may we abide in the godhead, dear to thee, O Mother infinite, dear to thee, O Lord of Strength, in all our speaking. O Mitra, O Varuna, this is he that seeth for the soul, the Sun that rises over earth and heaven in the pervading wideness, and he guards all that is in motion and all that is stable; for he beholds the straight things and the crooked in mortals. Seven shining energies has this Bright One yoked today in the world of our achievement and they bear him on in their clarity, and he beholds the homes of the soul and the places of its birth like a herdsman who watches over his herds.

Upward rise your honied satisfactions; for our sun has climbed into the ocean of pure Light and for him the Children of the Infinite hew out his paths, even the Lord of Love and the Lord of Strength and the Lord of Purity in one harmony. These are they that discern and separate all the much falsehood in us; they are the Lords of Love and Strength and Purity. These grow in the house of Truth, puissant and unvanquished Sons of the Infinite. These are the Love and the Purity hard to repress who by their discernings give knowledge to him who has no knowledge; they bring to him their impulses of a will that has right vision and they lead him by the good path beyond the evil. These with sleepless eyes see and know in his earth for man that is ignorant and lead him: in his forward faring he comes to the fathomless pit in the river, yet shall they bear him across to the other shore of this wideness. The peace and the protection and the happiness which the infinite Mother and the Lords of Love and Purity give to the servant of the sacrifice, in that let us

found all our creation and building, let us do no violence to the godhead, O ye swift Wayfarers.

He whom the Lord of Purity upholds, puts away from his altar by the powers of sacrifice whatsoever hurters: cut away, O Lord of Strength, from the servant of the sacrifice the hurt and the division, form in him that vast other world, O givers of the abundance. A blazing strength and a world of illumination is the coming together of these Godheads and they overcome by their near and approaching force. Lo, we quiver with the fear of you; set us at ease by the greatness of your discerning. For when a man by sacrifice wins right-mindedness in the getting of the plenitude, in the conquest of the supreme Felicity, the strong Warriors, the Lords of the Treasure cleave to his heart of emotion and they form there the Vast for his dwelling-place making it of a perfect temper. For you we have made in front this work of the divine representative in our sacrifices; lead us safe through all difficult places. Keep us always with constant felicities.

यदद्य सूर्य ब्रवोऽनागा उद्यन्मित्राय वरुणाय सत्यम् ।
वयं देवत्रादिते स्याम तव प्रियासो अर्यमन् गृणन्तः ॥ १॥

एष स्य मित्रावरुणा नृचक्षा उभे उदेति सूर्यो अभि ज्मन् ।
विश्वस्य स्थातुर्जगतश्च गोपा ऋजु मर्तेषु वृजिना च पश्यन् ॥ २॥

अयुक्त सप्त हरितः सधस्थाद्या ईं वहन्ति सूर्यं घृताचीः ।
धामानि मित्रावरुणा युवाकुः सं यो यूथेव जनिमानि चष्टे ॥ ३॥

उद्वां पृक्षासो मधुमन्तो अस्थुरा सूर्यो अरुहच्छुक्रमर्णः ।
यस्मा आदित्या अध्वनो रदन्ति मित्रो अर्यमा वरुणः सजोषाः ॥ ४॥

इमे चेतारो अनृतस्य भूरेर्मित्रो अर्यमा वरुणो हि सन्ति ।
इम ऋतस्य वावृधुर्दुरोणे शग्मासः पुत्रा अदितेरदब्धाः ॥ ५॥

इमे मित्रो वरुणो दूळभासोऽचेतसं चिच्चितयन्ति दक्षैः ।
अपि क्रतुं सुचेतसं वतन्तस्तिरश्चिदंहः सुपथा नयन्ति ॥ ६॥

इमे दिवो अनिमिषा पृथिव्याश्चिकित्वांसो अचेतसं नयन्ति ।
प्रव्राजे चिन्नद्यो गाधमस्ति पारं नो अस्य विष्पितस्य पर्षन् ॥ ७॥

यद् गोपावददितिः शर्म भद्रं मित्रो यच्छन्ति वरुणः सुदासे ।
तस्मिन्ना तोकं तनयं दधाना मा कर्म देवहेळनं तुरासः ॥ ८॥

अव वेदिं होत्राभिर्यजेत रिपः काश्चिद्वरुणध्रुतः सः ।
परि द्वेषोभिरर्यमा वृणक्तूरुं सुदासे वृषणा उ लोकम् ॥ ९॥

सस्वश्चिद्धि समृतिस्त्वेष्येषामपीच्येन सहसा सहन्ते ।
युष्मद्भिया वृषणो रेजमाना दक्षस्य चिन्महिना मृळता नः ॥ १०॥

यो ब्रह्मणे सुमतिमायजाते वाजस्य सातौ परमस्य रायः ।
सीक्षन्त मन्युं मघवानो अर्य उरु क्षयाय चक्रिरे सुधातु ॥ ११॥

इयं देव पुरोहितिर्युवभ्यां यज्ञेषु मित्रावरुणावकारि ।
विश्वानि दुर्गा पिपृतं तिरो नो यूयं पात स्वस्तिभिः सदा नः ॥ १२॥

A Hymn of the Thought-Gods

The shining host has arisen in my soul, the host of the Thought-gods and they sing a hymn as they march upward, a hymn of the heart's illumination. March thou on, O my soul, impetuously to their violent and mighty music. For they are drunken with the joy of an inspiration that betrays not to falsehood, because the truth of eternal Nature is its guide. They are the comrades of a firm and blazing Light and in the force of the Light they work out their lofty aggressions; conquerors, violently they march on their path, self-protecting they guard of themselves the soul against falsehood; for they are many and march without a gap in their brilliant ranks. Violent are they as a herd of rushing bulls; the nights come against them, but they overleap the nights; they possess the earth in our thoughts and they rise with them to the heavens. No half-lights, no impotent things are they, but mighty in aggression and puissant to attain. Spears of light they hold and they loose them from their hands at the children of Darkness; the flashing lightnings of the Thought-gods search the night and the light of heaven rises of itself on our souls at their battle-call. Truth is their shining strength; the hosts of the Thought-gods are the artificers of the soul and they fashion its immortality; themselves they yoke their coursers to the chariot of our life and they drive galloping to the joy that is its goal.

They have bathed their limbs in the waters of Parushni, in the stream that has a multitude of currents, they have put on their divine raiment and now with the wheels of their chariots they break open all Nature's secret caves. Sometimes they march on a thousand branching paths, sometimes they rush direct at their goal; sometimes their paths are within, sometimes they follow outward Nature's thousand ways; the world-sacrifice fulfils itself by the many names of their godhead and by their ever-widening

march. Now they make themselves as galloping forces of our life, now they are gods and powers of the soul; at last they put on forms of a supreme world, forms of vision, forms of light. They have attained to the goal, they support the rhythms of the world, chanting they weave their glorious dance round the very fountain of things; they are creators of supreme forms, they expand the soul in vision and make it a divine blaze of light. For these are rushing seekers of the Truth; for the Truth their lightnings stab and search; they are seers, they are creators and ordainers; their aggressions are inspired by the might and force of heaven, therefore affirmed in our thoughts they speed carrying us confidently on their way. When the mind is full of them, it is borne on towards godhead, for they have the radiant inspiration of the path.

Who has known the place of their birth or who has sat in their high beatitudes? Who desires and seeks his Friend beyond? A Mother bore them many-hued in her soul and of her they tell him; a Violent One was their Father whose impulse drives all beings that are born, and him they reveal. Seven and seven the Thought-gods came to me and seven times they gave a hundred-fold; in Yamuna I will bathe the shining herds of my thoughts which they have given, I will purify my swiftnesses in the river of my soul.

Lo, they march on in their cohorts and their companies; let us follow in their steps with the pace of our thinkings. For they bear with them an imperishable seed of creation and the grain of immortal forms and this if they plant in the fields of the soul, there shall grow as its harvest life universal and bliss transcendent. They will put by all that derides our aspiration and pass beyond all that limits us; they will destroy all fault and dumbness and the soul's poverties. For theirs is the rain of the abundance of heaven and theirs the storms that set flowing the rivers of life; their thunders are the chant of the hymn of the gods and the proclamations of the Truth. They are the eye that leads us on a happy path and he who follows them shall not stumble, nor have pain nor hurt, nor decay nor die; their plenitudes are not destroyed nor their felicities diminished; they make of man

a seer and a king. Their vastness is the blazing of a divine Sun; they shall place us in the seats of Immortality.

Of all that was of old and of all that is new, of all that rises from the soul and all that seeks expression they are the impellers. They stand in the upper and the lower and the middle heaven; they have descended from the highest supreme. They are born of the Truth; they are luminous leaders of the mind; they shall drink the sweet wine of delight and give us the supreme inspirations. The Woman, the Divine is with them who shall put away from us hurt and thirst and desire and refashion man's mind in the form of the godhead. Lo, these are knowers of the Truth, seers whom the Truth inspires, vast in expression, vast in diffusion, young for ever and immortal.

The God of the Mystic Wine

Rig Veda IX.75 and 42

These two hymns are rendered as literally as possible so as to show the original symbolism of the Veda untranslated into its psychological equivalents.

I

अभि प्रियाणि पवते चनोहितो नामानि यह्वो अधि येषु वर्धते ।
आ सूर्यस्य बृहतो बृहन्नधि रथं विश्वञ्चमरुहद्विचक्षणः ॥१॥

1. Placed in delight he flows to the pleasant Names in which he increases; vast and wise he ascends the chariot of the vast sun, the chariot of a universal movement.

ऋतस्य जिह्वा पवते मधु प्रियं वक्ता पतिर्धियो अस्या अदाभ्यः ।
दधाति पुत्रः पित्रोरपीच्यं नाम तृतीयमधि रोचने दिवः ॥२॥

2. Tongue of the Truth, a pleasant honey,[1] he flows speaker and lord of this Thought and invincible; the Son places the third hidden Name of the Parents[2] in the luminous world of Heaven.

अव द्युतानः कलशाँ अचिक्रदन्नृभिर्येमानः कोश आ हिरण्यये ।
अभीमृतस्य दोहना अनूषताऽधि त्रिपृष्ठ उषसो वि राजति ॥३॥

[1] The sweet wine of the Soma.

[2] Heaven and Earth; there are three heavens and three earths and at the summit is the triple luminous world of Heaven called Swar and described lower down as the triple back or threefold level in the Dawn. That is the world of the "vast sun" and is itself described as the Truth, the Right, the Vast.

3. Breaking into light he cries down into the jars, guided by men, in the golden sheath; in him the milkings of the Truth dawn out,[3] he shines wide on the triple back of the Dawn.

अद्रिभिः सुतो मतिभिश्चनोहितः प्ररोचयन् रोदसी मातरा शुचिः ।
रोमाण्यव्या समया वि धावति मधोर्धारा पिन्वमाना दिवेदिवे ॥ ४ ॥

4. Pressed out by the stones, placed in delight by the thoughts, pure, making to shine out the two mothers, Earth and Heaven, he runs evenly through all the hairs of the Sheep;[4] his stream of honey goes on increasing day by day.

परि सोम प्र धन्वा स्वस्तये नृभिः पुनानो अभि वासयाशिरम् ।
ये ते मदा आहनसो विहायसस्तेभिरिन्द्रं चोदय दातवे मघम् ॥ ५ ॥

5. Race everywhere, O Soma, for our happiness, purified by men clothe thyself with the mixings; with those thy raptures that are smiting and wide-extended, impel Indra to give his plenty.[5]

II

जनयन् रोचना दिवो जनयन्नप्सु सूर्यम् ।
वसानो गा अपो हरिः ॥ १ ॥

1. Giving birth to the luminous worlds of heaven,[6] giving birth to the Sun in the waters,[7] the Brilliant One clothes himself with the waters and the rays.[8]

3 Or, "to him the milkers of the Truth cry out the chant."

4 The strainer in which the Soma is purified is made of the fleece of the Ewe. Indra is the Ram; the Ewe must therefore be an energy of Indra, probably the divinised sense-mind, *indriyam*.

5 The Soma was mixed with water, milk and other ingredients: Soma is said to clothe himself with the Waters and with the "cows", that is, the illuminations or yield of Dawn, the shining Cow.

6 The three worlds of Swar.

7 Agni, Surya and Soma himself are said to be found in the waters or seven rivers.

8 *Gāḥ*, meaning both cows and rays.

एष प्रत्नेन मन्मना देवो देवेभ्यस्परि ।
धारया पवते सुतः ॥ २॥

2. He by the ancient thought flows pressed out in a stream, a god around the gods.

वावृधानाय तूर्वये पवन्ते वाजसातये ।
सोमाः सहस्रपाजसः ॥ ३॥

3. For one increasing and swiftly advancing[9] there flow for his winning of the plenty the Soma-juices with their thousand strengths.

दुहानः प्रत्नमित्पयः पवित्रे परि षिच्यते ।
क्रन्दन्देवाँ अजीजनत् ॥ ४॥

4. Milked out, the ancient food, he is poured into the strainer that purifies and shouting he brings to birth the gods.

अभि विश्वानि वार्याऽभि देवाँ ऋतावृधः ।
सोमः पुनानो अर्षति ॥ ५॥

5. Soma, purifying himself, travels to all desirable boons, to the gods who increase the Truth.

गोमन्नः सोम वीरवदश्वावद्वाजवत्सुतः ।
पवस्व बृहतीरिषः ॥ ६॥

6. Stream on us, O Soma, when thou art pressed out, that in which are the Cows, the Heroes, the Steeds, the Plenty; stream impulsions vast.[10]

[9] On the path, through all obstacles; the sacrifice is figured both as a growth of man and as a journey.

[10] "Large foods", according to the ritualist commentator; as there are here two words meaning food in his usual rendering, *iṣ* and *vāja*, he gives another meaning to *vāja* and explains the verse "give us a wealth along with which there are cows, men, horses and battle and give us plentiful food."

The Vedic Fire

Rig Veda I.94 and 97

I

इमं स्तोममर्हते जातवेदसे रथमिव सं महेमा मनीषया ।
भद्रा हि नः प्रमतिरस्य संसद्यग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥१॥

This is the omniscient who knows the law of our being and is sufficient to his works; let us build the song of his truth by our thought and make it as if a chariot on which he shall mount. When he dwells with us, then a happy wisdom becomes ours. With him for friend we cannot come to harm.

यस्मै त्वमायजसे स साधत्यनर्वा क्षेति दधते सुवीर्यम् ।
स तूताव नैनमश्नोत्यंहतिरग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥२॥

Whosoever makes him his priest of the sacrifice, reaches the perfection that is the fruit of his striving, a home on a height of being where there is no warring and no enemies; he confirms in himself an ample energy; he is safe in his strength, evil cannot lay its hand upon him.

शकेम त्वा समिधं साधया धियस्त्वे देवा हविरदन्त्याहुतम् ।
त्वमादित्याँ आ वह तान् ह्युश्मस्यग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥३॥

This is the fire of our sacrifice! May we have strength to kindle it to its height, may it perfect our thoughts. In this all that we give must be thrown that it may become a food for the gods; this shall bring to us the godheads of the infinite consciousness who are our desire.

भरामेध्मं कृणवामा हवींषि ते चितयन्तः पर्वणापर्वणा वयम् ।
जीवातवे प्रतरं साधया धियोऽग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ ४॥

Let us gather fuel for it, let us prepare for it offerings, let us make ourselves conscious of the jointings of its times and its seasons. It shall so perfect our thoughts that they shall extend our being and create for us a larger life.

विशां गोपा अस्य चरन्ति जन्तवो द्विपच्च यदुत चतुष्पदक्तुभिः ।
चित्रः प्रकेत उषसो महाँ अस्यग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ ५॥

This is the guardian of the world and its peoples, the shepherd of all these herds; all that is born moves by his rays and is compelled by his flame, both the two-footed and the four-footed creatures. This is the rich and great thought-awakening of the Dawn within.

त्वमध्वर्युरुत होतासि पूर्व्यः प्रशास्ता पोता जनुषा पुरोहितः ।
विश्वा विद्वाँ आर्त्विज्या धीर पुष्यसि
अग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ ६॥

This is the priest who guides the march of the sacrifice, the first and ancient who calls to the gods and gives the offerings; his is the command and his the purification; from his birth he stands in front, the vicar of our sacrifice. He knows all the works of this divine priesthood, for he is the Thinker who increases in us.

यो विश्वतः सुप्रतीकः सदृङ्ङसि दूरे चित् सन्तळिदिवाति रोचसे ।
रात्र्याश्चिदन्धो अति देव पश्यस्यग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ ७॥

The faces of this God are everywhere and he fronts all things perfectly; he has the eye and the vision: when we see him from afar, yet he seems near to us, so brilliantly he shines across the gulfs. He sees beyond the darkness of our night, for his vision is divine.

पूर्वो देवा भवतु सुन्वतो रथोऽस्माकं शंसो अभ्यस्तु दूढ्यः ।
तदा जानीतोत पुष्यता वचोऽग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ ८॥

O you godheads, let our chariot be always in front, let our clear and strong word overcome all that thinks the falsehood. O you godheads, know for us, know in us that Truth, increase the speech that finds and utters it.

वधैर्दुःशंसाँ अप दूढ्यो जहि दूरे वा ये अन्ति वा के चिदत्रिणः ।
अथा यज्ञाय गृणते सुगं कृध्यग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ ९॥

With blows that slay cast from our path, O thou Flame, the powers that stammer in the speech and stumble in the thought, the devourers of our power and our knowledge who leap at us from near and shoot at us from afar. Make the path of the sacrifice a clear and happy journeying.

यदयुक्था अरुषा रोहिता रथे वातजूता वृषभस्येव ते रवः ।
आदिन्वसि वनिनो धूमकेतुनाऽग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ १०॥

Thou hast bright red horses for thy chariot, O Will divine, who are driven by the stormwind of thy passion; thou roarest like a bull, thou rushest upon the forests of life, on its pleasant trees that encumber thy path, with the smoke of thy passion in which there is the thought and the sight.

अध स्वनादुत बिभ्युः पतत्रिणो द्रप्सा यत् ते यवसादो व्यस्थिरन् ।
सुगं तत् ते तावकेभ्यो रथेभ्योऽग्नेसख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥ ११॥

At the noise of thy coming even they that wing in the skies are afraid, when thy eaters of the pasture go abroad in their haste. So thou makest clear thy path to thy kingdom that thy chariots may run towards it easily.

अयं मित्रस्य वरुणस्य धायसेऽवयातां मरुतां हेळो अद्भुतः ।
मृळा सु नो भूत्वेषां मनः पुनरग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥१२॥

This dread and tumult of thee, is it not the wonderful and exceeding wrath of the gods of the Life rushing down on us to found here the purity of the Infinite, the harmony of the Lover? Be gracious, O thou fierce Fire, let their minds be again sweet to us and pleasant.

देवो देवानामसि मित्रो अद्भुतो वसुर्वसूनामसि चारुरध्वरे ।
शर्मन्त्स्याम तव सप्रथस्तमेऽग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥१३॥

God art thou of the gods, for thou art the lover and friend; richest art thou of the masters of the Treasure, the founders of the home, for thou art very bright and pleasant in the pilgrimage and the sacrifice. Very wide and far-extending is the peace of thy beatitudes; may that be the home of our abiding!

तत् ते भद्रं यत् समिद्धः स्वे दमे सोमाहुतो जरसे मृळयत्तमः ।
दधासि रत्नं द्रविणं च दाशुषेऽग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव ॥१४॥

That is the bliss of him and the happiness; for then is this Will very gracious and joy-giving when in its own divine house, lit into its high and perfect flame, it is adored by our thoughts and satisfied with the wine of our delight. Then it lavishes its deliciousness, then it returns in treasure and substance all that we have given into its hands.

यस्मै त्वं सुद्रविणो ददाशोऽनागास्त्वमदिते सर्वताता ।
यं भद्रेण शवसा चोदयासि प्रजावता राधसा ते स्याम ॥१५॥
स त्वमग्ने सौभगत्वस्य विद्वानस्माकमायुः प्र तिरेह देव ।
तन्नो मित्रो वरुणो मामहन्तामदितिः सिन्धुः पृथिवी उत द्यौः ॥१६॥

O thou infinite and indivisible Being, it is thou ever that formest the sinless universalities of the spirit by our sacrifice; thou compellest and inspirest thy favourites by thy happy and luminous

forcefulness, by the fruitful riches of thy joy. Among them may we be numbered. Thou art the knower of felicity and the increaser here of our life and advancer of our being! Thou art the godhead!

II

अप नः शोशुचदघमग्ने शुशुग्ध्या रयिम् ।
अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ १॥

Burn away from us the sin, flame out on us the bliss. Burn away from us the sin!

सुक्षेत्रिया सुगातुया वसूया च यजामहे ।
अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ २॥

For the perfect path to the happy field, for the exceeding treasure when we would do sacrifice, — burn away from us the sin!

प्र यद् भन्दिष्ठ एषां प्रास्माकासश्च सूरयः ।
अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ ३॥

That the happiest of all these many godheads may be born in us, that the seers who see in our thought may multiply, — burn away from us the sin!

प्र यत् ते अग्ने सूरयो जायेमहि प्र ते वयम् ।
अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ ४॥

That thy seers, O Flame divine, may multiply and we be newborn as thine, — burn away from us the sin!

प्र यद् अग्नेः सहस्वतो विश्वतो यन्ति भानवः ।
अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ ५॥

When the flaming rays of thy might rush abroad on every side violently, — burn away from us the sin!

> त्वं हि विश्वतोमुख विश्वतः परिभूरसि ।
> अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ ६ ॥

O God, thy faces are everywhere! thou besiegest us on every side with thy being. Burn away from us the sin!

> द्विषो नो विश्वतोमुखाति नावेव पारय ।
> अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ ७ ॥

Let thy face front the Enemy wherever he turns; bear us in thy ship over the dangerous waters. Burn away from us the sin!

> स नः सिन्धुमिव नावयाति पर्षा स्वस्तये ।
> अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ ८ ॥

As in a ship over the ocean, bear us over into thy felicity. Burn away from us the sin!

A Vedic Hymn to the Fire

A HYMN OF THE UNIVERSAL DIVINE FORCE AND WILL[1]

वया इदग्ने अग्नयस्ते अन्ये त्वे विश्वे अमृता मादयन्ते ।
वैश्वानर नाभिरसि क्षितीनां स्थूणेव जनाँ उपमिद् ययन्थ ॥ १॥

Other flames are only branches of thy stock, O Fire. All the immortals take in thee their rapturous joy. O universal Godhead, thou art the navel-knot of the earths and their inhabitants; all men born thou controllest and supportest like a pillar.

मूर्धा दिवो नाभिरग्निः पृथिव्या अथाभवदरती रोदस्योः ।
तं त्वा देवासोऽजनयन्त देवं वैश्वानर ज्योतिरिदार्याय ॥ २॥

The Flame is the head of heaven and the navel of the earth and he is the power that moves at work in the two worlds. O Vaishwanara, the gods brought thee to birth a god to be a light to Aryan man.

आ सूर्ये न रश्मयो ध्रुवासो वैश्वानरे दधिरेऽग्ना वसूनि ।
या पर्वतेष्वोषधीष्वप्सु या मानुषेष्वसि तस्य राजा ॥ ३॥

As the firm rays sit steadfast in the Sun, all treasures have been placed in the universal godhead and flame. King art thou of all the riches that are in the growths of the earth and the hills and the waters and all the riches that are in men.

[1] A hymn of Nodha Gautama to Agni Vaishwanara in the Rig Veda.

बृहती इव सूनवे रोदसी गिरो होता मनुष्यो न दक्षः ।
स्वर्वते सत्यशुष्माय पूर्वीर्वैश्वानराय नृतमाय यह्वीः ॥ ४ ॥

Heaven and Earth grow as if vaster worlds to the Son. He is the priest of our sacrifice and sings our words even as might a man of discerning skill. To Vaishwanara, for this most strong god who brings with him the light of the sun-world, its many mighty waters because his strength is of the truth.

दिवश्चित् ते बृहतो जातवेदो वैश्वानर प्र रिरिचे महित्वम् ।
राजा कृष्टीनामसि मानुषीणां युधा देवेभ्यो वरिवश्चकर्थ ॥ ५ ॥

O universal godhead, O knower of all things born, thy excess of greatness overflows even the Great Heaven. Thou art the king of the toiling human peoples and by battle madest the supreme good for the gods.

वैश्वानरो महिम्ना विश्वकृष्टिर्भरद्वाजेषु यजतो विभावा ।
शातवनेये शतिनीभिरग्निः पुरुनीथे जरते सूनृतावान् ॥ ७ ॥

This is the universal godhead who by his greatness labours in all the peoples, the lustrous master of sacrifice, the Flame with his hundred treasures. This is he who has the word of the Truth.

Parashara's Hymns to the Lord of the Flame

1

पश्वा न तायुं गुहा चतन्तं नमो युजानं नमो वहन्तम् ।
सजोषा धीराः पदैरनु ग्मन्नुप त्वा सीदन्विश्वे यजत्राः ॥ १ ॥

He hides himself like a thief with the Cow of vision in the secret cavern of being taking to himself and bearing thither our adoration. The thinkers nurse a common joy in him in their hearts and follow in his way by her footprints. All the Masters of sacrifice come to thee, O Flame, in the secrecy.

ऋतस्य देवा अनु व्रता गुर्भुवत्परिष्टिर्द्यौर्न भूम ।
वर्धन्तीमापः पन्वा सुशिश्विमृतस्य योना गर्भे सुजातम् ॥ २ ॥

The Gods follow after him the ways and works of the Truth. He shall stand encompassing the earth like heaven. The Waters increase by their toil growing in his bulk the Flame because he was born perfect in their womb in the house of Truth.

पुष्टिर्न रण्वा क्षितिर्न पृथ्वी गिरिर्न भुज्म क्षोदो न शंभु ।
अत्यो नाज्मन्त्सर्गप्रतक्तः सिन्धुर्न क्षोदः क ईं वराते ॥ ३ ॥

He is like delightful increase and like the wide earth our dwelling-place. He is enjoyable like a hill and bliss-giving like fast-running water. He is like a horse in the battle-charge urged to the gallop and like a rushing river, and who then shall hedge in his course?

जामिः सिन्धूनां भ्रातेव स्वस्रामिभ्यान्न राजा वनान्यत्ति ।
यद्वातजूतो वना व्यस्थादग्निर्ह दाति रोमा पृथिव्याः ॥ ४ ॥

He is the close comrade of the Rivers as a brother of his sisters. He devours Earth's pleasant woods as a king devours his enemies. When driven by the breath of the wind he stands about in all the woodland, the Flame tears asunder the hairs of earth's body.

श्वसित्यप्सु हंसो न सीदन् क्रत्वा चेतिष्ठो विशामुषर्भुत् ।
सोमो न वेधा ऋतप्रजातः पशुर्न शिश्वा विभुर्दूरेभाः ॥ ५ ॥

He breathes in the Waters like a seated swan. Awake in the dawn he has power by the will of his works to give knowledge to the peoples. He is like the god of the nectar-wine and born of Truth and a creator. He is like the Cow with her child. He is all-pervading and his light is seen from a far distance.

2

वनेषु जायुर्मर्तेषु मित्रो वृणीते श्रुष्टिं राजेवाजुर्यम् ।
क्षेमो न साधुः क्रतुर्न भद्रो भुवत्स्वाधीर्होता हव्यवाट् ॥ १ ॥

He is the conqueror in the forests, he is the friend in mortals. He chooses for himself inspired knowledge as a king an unaging councillor. He is like a perfect good, he is like a happy will just in its thoughts. He has become to us the priest of our sacrifice and the carrier of our offerings.

हस्ते दधानो नृम्णा विश्वान्यमे देवान्धाद् गुहा निषीदन् ।
विदन्तीमत्र नरो धियंधा हृदा यत्तष्टान्मन्त्राँ अशंसन् ॥ २ ॥

He holds in his hands all mights: sitting in the secret cave of being he founds the gods in strength. And it is there that men who hold the thought in their minds, when they have given utterance to its sacred words carved into shape by the heart, discover the god.

अजो न क्षां दाधार पृथिवीं तस्तम्भ द्यां मन्त्रेभिः सत्यैः ।
प्रिया पदानि पश्वो नि पाहि विश्वायुरग्ने गुहा गुहं गाः ॥ ३॥

He holds like one unborn the wide earth our dwelling-place and pillars heaven with the truth of the sacred words of his thinking. O Flame, thou art universal life; guard the pleasant footholds of the Cow of vision; watch over the herd of the rays in the secrecy of the secret cavern.

य ईं चिकेत गुहा भवन्तमा यः ससाद धारामृतस्य ।
वि ये चृतन्त्यृता सपन्त आदिद्वसूनि प्र ववाचास्मै ॥ ४॥

He who has known him in the secret cave, he who has come to the stream of the Truth, all who touch and penetrate into the things of the Truth, to such he speaks the word of his treasures.

वि यो वीरुत्सु रोधन्महित्वोत प्रजा उत प्रसूष्वन्तः ।
चित्तिरपां दमे विश्वायुः सद्मेव धीराः संमाय चक्रुः ॥ ५॥

This is the Flame who besieges us with his greatness in all the growths of the earth and who is all the children of the worlds and who is within in all the mothers. He is knowledge in the house of the Waters and he is universal life. The thinkers have measured and constructed him like a mansion.

3

श्रीणन्नुप स्थाद्दिवं भुरण्युः स्थातुश्चरथमक्तून्व्यूर्णोत् ।
परि यदेषामेको विश्वेषाम् भुवद्देवो देवानां महित्वा ॥ १॥

The Carrier of our gifts speeds on his way and reaches up towards heaven. He unravels out of the nights all that is stable and all that moves. This is he that becomes the one God who is around all the gods in his greatness.

आदित्ते विश्वे क्रतुं जुषन्त शुष्काद्यद्देव जीवो जनिष्ठाः ।
भजन्त विश्वे देवत्वं नाम ऋतं सपन्तो अमृतमेवैः ॥ २॥

All serve with gladness thy will to works when, O God, thou art born as the living being from a dry matter. All by thy movings get touch of the Truth and touch of immortality and they enjoy the Name, the Godhead.

ऋतस्य प्रेषा ऋतस्य धीतिर्विश्वायुर्विश्वे अपांसि चक्रुः ।
यस्तुभ्यं दाशाद्यो वा ते शिक्षात्तस्मै चिकित्वान्रयिं दयस्व ॥ ३॥

He is the missioned impulse of Truth and the thinking of the Truth. He is the universal life and all do in him their works. To him who gives to thee and to him who takes of thee be knower of the knowledge and give him his portion of thy treasure.

होता निषत्तो मनोरपत्ये स चिन्न्वासां पती रयीणाम् ।
इच्छन्त रेतो मिथस्तनूषु सं जानत स्वैर्दक्षैरमूराः ॥ ४॥

He is the priest of the sacrifice who is seated in the Son of Man: he is the lord of these riches. The wise desire mutually his seed in their bodies and they come altogether to know him by their own discerning minds.

पितुर्न पुत्राः क्रतुं जुषन्त श्रोषन्ये अस्य शासं तुरासः ।
वि राय और्णोद् दुरः पुरुक्षुः पिपेश नाकं स्तृभिर्दमूनाः ॥ ५॥

Those who listen to his word of instruction, those who are swift to the journey, serve gladly his will as sons the will of a father. He is the house of a multitude of riches and flings wide the door of his felicitous treasure. He is the dweller in the home and gives form to Paradise by the light of his stars.

4

रयिर्न चित्रा सूरो न संदृगायुर्न प्राणो नित्यो न सूनुः ।
तक्वा न भूर्णिर्वना सिषक्ति पयो न धेनुः शुचिर्विभावा ॥१॥

He is as if a marvellous shining riches and like the wide seeing of the sun. He is as if life and the breath of our existence and he is as if our eternal child. He is like a galloper that bears us. He fastens on the woodlands. He gives of his substance as the cow its milk. He is wide and lustrous, he is very bright and pure.

दाधार क्षेममोको न रण्वो यवो न पक्वो जेता जनानाम् ।
ऋषिर्न स्तुभ्वा विक्षु प्रशस्तो वाजी न प्रीतो वयो दधाति ॥२॥

He is pleasant like a home and holds all our good. He is to us like ripe corn. He is a conqueror of men and like a chanting Rishi; the word of him is among the folk. He is like an exulting steed and he lays on us our birth to knowledge.

दुरोकशोचिः क्रतुर्न नित्यो जायेव योनावरं विश्वस्मै ।
चित्रो यदभ्राट् छ्वेतो न विक्षु रथो न रुक्मी त्वेषः समत्सु ॥३॥

He is light in a house difficult to inhabit.[1] He is as an eternal will that acts in us; he is like a wife in our chamber and sufficient to every man. When he burns out wonderful and manifold, he is as if the white horse in the peoples. He is like a chariot made of gold: he is like a keen flame in the battles.

सेनेव सृष्टामं दधात्यस्तुर्न दिद्युत् त्वेषप्रतीका ।
यमो ह जातो यमो जनित्वं जारः कनीनां पतिर्जनीनाम् ॥४॥

[1] Or, "He is a light difficult to kindle."

He is like an army running to the charge and puts strength in us: he is like the flaming shaft of the Archer that has a keen burning face. He is the twin that is born and the twin who is that which is to be born. He is the lover of the virgins and the husband of the mothers.

तं वश्चराथा वयं वसत्यास्तं न गावो नक्षन्त इद्धम् ।
सिन्धुर्न क्षोदः प्र नीचीरैनोन्नवन्त गावः स्वर्दृशीके ॥५॥

When his light is kindled, we come to him as the herds come to their home: we come to him by your journeying, O gods, and we come to him by your sitting still. He is like a river running in its channel and sends in front the downward Waters: the herd of the Rays move to him in the seeing of the world of the Sun.

5

शुक्रः शुशुक्वाँ उषो न जारः पप्रा समीची दिवो न ज्योतिः ।
परि प्रजातः क्रत्वा बभूथ भुवो देवानां पिता पुत्रः सन् ॥१॥

He burns out bright as if the lover of Dawn and fills the two equal worlds like the light of heaven. He is born by our will to works and he comes into being all around us. He is the son and becomes the father of the Gods.

वेधा अदृप्तो अग्निर्विजानन्नूधर्न गोनां स्वाद्मा पितूनाम् ।
जने न शेव आहूर्यः सन्मध्ये निषत्तो रण्वो दुरोणे ॥२॥

This is the Fire that has perfect knowledge and is a creator whom none can rend asunder. He is as if the teat of the cows of light and the sweetness of the draughts of the wine. He is as if one happy in the creature and must be laid hands on where he sits blissful in the middle of the house.

पुत्रो न जातो रण्वो दुरोणे वाजी न प्रीतो विशो वि तारीत् ।
विशो यदह्वे नृभिः सनीळा अग्निर्देवत्वा विश्वान्यश्याः ॥३॥

He is as if our rapturous son born to us in the house and he is like a courser pleased and glad that carries to safety the peoples. When I call to the Nations who dwell in one lair with the Strong Ones, the Flame enjoys all the godheads.

नकिष्ट एता व्रता मिनन्ति नृभ्यो यदेभ्यः श्रुष्टिं चकर्थ ।
तत्तु ते दंसो यदहन्त्समानैर्नृभिर्यद्युक्तो विवे रपांसि ॥ ४॥

None can impair the ways of thy works when thou hast created inspired knowledge for the Strong Ones. This is thy work that yoked with the equal Gods thou smitest and scatterest the powers of evil.

उषो न जारो विभावोस्रः संज्ञातरूपश्चिकेतदस्मै ।
त्मना वहन्तो दुरो व्यृण्वन्नवन्त विश्वे स्वर्दृशीके ॥ ५॥

Very bright and lustrous is he like the paramour of Dawn. Let his form be known and his knowledge awake for this human being, let all bear him in themselves, swing wide the gates and walk in the vision of the world of the Sun.

6

वनेम पूर्वीरर्यो मनीषा अग्निः सुशोको विश्वान्यश्याः ।
आ दैव्यानि व्रता चिकित्वाना मानुषस्य जनस्य जन्म ॥ १॥

Men battling by our mind of thought may we make conquest of many powers and Agni burning brightly enjoy and possess in us all things that are, know the divine workings and know the births of the human creature.

गर्भो यो अपां गर्भो वनानां गर्भश्च स्थातां गर्भश्चरथाम् ।
अद्रौ चिदस्मा अन्तर्दुरोणे विशां न विश्वो अमृतः स्वाधीः ॥ २॥

He is the child of the waters and the child of the forests and the child of things stable and the child of things that move. He is there for man in the stone of the mountain and within in the house. He is one universal to the peoples and the Immortal and the right-thinking One.

स हि क्षपावाँ अग्नी रयीणां दाशद्यो अस्मा अरं सूक्तैः ।
एता चिकित्वो भूमा नि पाहि देवानां जन्म मर्तांश्च विद्वान् ॥ ३॥

The Fire is master of the nights and imparts to man sufficiency of his treasures by the power of perfect words. O knower, who hast knowledge of the births of the gods and knowledge of mortals, guard these earths.

वर्धान्यं पूर्वीः क्षपो विरूपाः स्थातुश्च रथंऋतप्रवीतम् ।
अराधि होता स्वर्निषत्तः कृण्वन्विश्वान्यपांसि सत्या ॥ ४॥

Many nights that are different in form increase one who is the moving and the stable, one who has come from the Truth. He is a priest of sacrifice and enriches us where he sits in the world of the sun making our works things of truth.

गोषु प्रशस्तिं वनेषु धिषे भरन्त विश्वे बलिं स्वर्णः ।
वि त्वा नरः पुरुत्रा सपर्यन्पितुर्न जिव्रेर्वि वेदो भरन्त ॥ ५॥

Thou thinkest out thy hymn of utterance in the rays and in the forests and all the gods carry to us the light of the sun-world as a sacrifice. Men do thee service in the manifoldness and come bringing from thee riches of knowledge as from an aged father.

साधुर्न गृध्नुरस्तेव शूरो यातेव भीमस्त्वेषः समत्सु ॥ ६॥

He is like a perfecter of works, one who is a hungry seizer. He is like a hero shooting arrows and like a terrible assailant in the battle.

7

उप प्र जिन्वन्नुशतीरुशन्तं पतिं न नित्यं जनयः सनीळाः ।
स्वसारः श्यावीमरुषीमजुष्रञ्चित्रमुच्छन्तीमुषसं न गावः ॥१॥

The Mothers desire and are desired by him, sisters dwelling in one mansion, and come to him with joy as to their eternal husband, even as the rays to the Dawn, — Dawn dusk and flushing and breaking into rich lustres.

वीळु चिद् दृळ्हा पितरो न उक्तैरद्रिं रुजन्नङ्गिरसो रवेण ।
चक्रुर्दिवो बृहतो गातुमस्मे अहः स्वर्विविदुः केतुमुस्राः ॥२॥

Our fathers by their word, the Angiras seers, broke the strong and stubborn places, our fathers burst by their cry the rock of the mountain, made within us the path to the Great Heaven, discovered the Day and the sun-world and thought-vision and the herds of light.

दधन्नृतं धनयन्नस्य धीतिमादिदर्यो दिधिष्वो विभृत्राः ।
अतृष्यन्तीरपसो यन्त्यच्छा देवाञ्जन्म प्रयसा वर्धयन्तीः ॥३॥

Then the battling and thinking peoples held the Truth and enriched the thought of the human being and bore it in all its breadth; unthirsting, doers of the work increasing the divine birth by the delight-offering, their walk is towards the gods.

मथीद्यदीं विभृतो मातरिश्वा गृहेगृहे श्येतो जेन्यो भूत् ।
आदीं राज्ञे न सहीयसे सचा सन्ना दूत्यं भृगवाणो विवाय ॥४॥

When Matarishwan the Breath borne variously within us churned him into being, the Lord of Fire became the white and blissful one in every house. Man was a seer and kindler of the divine Fire and he dwelt with him like a companion and sent him on his messages like an envoy to a powerful king.

महे यत्पित्र ईं रसं दिवे करव त्सरत्पृशन्यश्चिकित्वान् ।
सृजदस्ता धृषता दिद्युमस्मै स्वायां देवो दुहितरि त्विषिं धात् ॥ ५ ॥

When he had made this sap of essence for the great Father Heaven, he came down, one close in touch, one who has knowledge. The Archer loosed violently on him his arrow of lightning, but the god set the keen lustre in his own daughter.

स्व आ यस्तुभ्यं दम आ विभाति नमो वा दाशादुशतो अनु द्यून् ।
वर्धो अग्ने वयो अस्य द्विबर्हा यासद्राया सरथं यं जुनासि ॥ ६ ॥

O Fire, increase, twofold in thy mass, the birth into knowledge of every one who is luminous to thy flame in thy own house or gives thee worship to thy desire day by day. Whomsoever thou makest to haste in one chariot with thee, travels with felicity of thy riches.

अग्निं विश्वा अभि पृक्षः सचन्ते समुद्रं न स्रवतः सप्त यह्वीः ।
न जामिभिर्वि चिकिते वयो नो विदा देवेषु प्रमतिं चिकित्वान् ॥ ७ ॥

All satisfying things join themselves to the Fire as the seven mighty rivers join themselves to the ocean. Our birth to knowledge was not discovered by the companion lords of life: but thou knowest it; impart thy mind of wisdom to the gods.

आ यदिषे नृपतिं तेज आनट् छुचि रेतो निषिक्तं द्यौरभीके ।
अग्निः शर्धमनवद्यं युवानं स्वाध्यं जनयत्सूदयच्च ॥ ८ ॥

When flaming force comes to the King of men to give him strength, when Heaven is cast before him as a pure seed, the Fire begets faultless, right-thinking, young the gods of life and hastens their armies.

मनो न योऽध्वनः सद्य एत्येकः सत्रा सूरो वस्व ईशे ।
राजाना मित्रावरुणा सुपाणी गोषु प्रियममृतं रक्षमाणा ॥ ९ ॥

One who goes immediately on the paths and alone like the mind, the Sun, ever is master of the treasure. The kings Mitra and Varuna with their beautiful hands are guarding delight and immortality amid the rays.

मा नो अग्ने सख्या पित्र्याणि प्र मर्षिष्ठा अभि विदुष्कविः सन् ।
नभो न रूपं जरिमा मिनाति पुरा तस्या अभिशस्तेरधीहि ॥१०॥

O Flame, violate not our ancestral comradeship; be still to us a knower and a seer. Age wastes the form of man like a cloud: know before that assault on our being.

8

नि काव्या वेधसः शश्वतस्कर्हस्ते दधानो नर्या पुरूणि ।
अग्निर्भुवद्रयिपती रयीणां सत्रा चक्राणो अमृतानि विश्वा ॥१॥

He creates within us the poet-wisdoms of the eternal Creator and holds in his hand many strengths of the gods. The Fire becomes to us a master of riches, creating together all immortal things.

अस्मे वत्सं परि षन्तं न विन्दन्निच्छन्तो विश्वे अमृता अमूराः ।
श्रमयुवः पदव्यो धियंधास्तस्थुः पदे परमे चार्वग्नेः ॥२॥

All the limitlessly wise immortals desired and found the Child within us who is everywhere around us. The gods who put thought in us toiling and travelling in his footing-places stood in the supreme seat and they came to the delightful house of the Flame.

तिस्रो यदग्ने शरदस्त्वामिच्छुचिं घृतेन शुचयः सपर्यान् ।
नामानि चिद्दधिरे यज्ञियान्यसूदयन्त तन्वः सुजाताः ॥३॥

When for three years they had served thee, O Fire, with the clear-offering and were pure to thy purity, then they held the sacrificial names, they sped their bodies come to perfect birth.

आ रोदसी बृहती वेविदानाः प्र रुद्रिया जभ्रिरे यज्ञियासः ।
विदन्मर्तो नेमधिता चिकित्वानग्निं पदे परमे तस्थिवांसम् ॥ ४॥

The Masters of sacrifice discovered the vast Earth and Heaven and gathered to man the powers of the Violent One, and now the mortal knows and discovers by the founder of the hemisphere the Flame where he stands in the world of his supreme session.

संजानाना उप सीदन्नभिज्ञु पत्नीवन्तो नमस्यं नमस्यन् ।
रिरिक्वांसस्तन्वः कृण्वत स्वाः सखा सख्युर्निमिषि रक्षमाणाः ॥ ५॥

The gods and their wives altogether knew him and they came to him kneeling and bowed to the one who must be adored; and they exceeded themselves and made their own divine bodies and each friend was guarded in the gaze of his friend.

त्रिः सप्त यद् गुह्यानि त्वे इत्पदाविदन्निहिता यज्ञियासः ।
तेभी रक्षन्ते अमृतं सजोषाः पशूञ्च स्थातॄञ्चरथं च पाहि ॥ ६॥

The Masters of sacrifice found hidden in thee the thrice seven secret seats and with one common will in their hearts they guard by them the immortality. O Fire, keep the herds and all that stand and all that moves.

विद्वाँ अग्ने वयुनानि क्षितीनां व्यानुषक्छुरुधो जीवसे धाः ।
अन्तर्विद्वाँ अध्वनो देवयानानतन्द्रो दूतो अभवो हविर्वाट् ॥ ७॥

O Fire, thou knowest all the revelations of knowledge of the dwellers upon earth; hold their strengths to uninterrupted continuity that they may live. And thou knowest the roads between, the paths of the gods, and thou art the sleepless messenger and the bearer of sacrifice.

स्वाध्यो दिव आ सप्त यह्वी रायो दुरो व्यृतज्ञा अजानन् ।
विदद् गव्यं सरमा दृळ्हमूर्वं येना नु कं मानुषी भोजते विट् ॥ ८॥

The seven right-thinking mighty Rivers of Heaven that know the Truth knew the doors of the felicitous treasure: Sarama discovered the strong fortified place, the largeness, the herded mass of the rays, and now the human creature enjoys by that wideness of the light.

आ ये विश्वा स्वपत्यानि तस्थुः कृण्वानासो अमृतत्वाय गातुम् ।
मह्ना महद्भिः पृथिवी वि तस्थे माता पुत्रैरदितिर्धायसे वेः ॥ ९॥

The great gods set their steps on all things that have fair issue, making our path to immortality. Earth stood wide in her greatness by the great Ones and the Mother Infinite came with her sons to uphold her.

अधि श्रियं नि दधुश्चारुमस्मिन्दिवो यदक्षी अमृता अकृण्वन् ।
अध क्षरन्ति सिन्धवो न सृष्टाः प्र नीचीरग्ने अरुषीरजानन् ॥ १०॥

The Immortals set in him splendour and beauty when they made the two eyes of heaven. The rivers of Truth are flowing, they have been let loose to their courses; their downward waters shone and knew, O Fire.

9

रयिर्न यः पितृवित्तो वयोधाः सुप्रणीतिश्चिकितुषो न शासुः ।
स्योनशीरतिथिर्न प्रीणानो होतेव सद्म विधतो वि तारीत् ॥ १॥

A divine Fire was the treasure discovered by our fathers: he sets on us our birth to knowledge and is as if the excellent leading of a wise teacher, and he is like a guest well pleased lying happy in our house, and he is like a priest come to our house of session and brings to safety those that do him worship.

देवो न यः सविता सत्यमन्मा क्रत्वा निपाति वृजनानि विश्वा ।
पुरुप्रशस्तो अमतिर्न सत्य आत्मेव शेवो दिधिषाय्यो भूत् ॥ २॥

He is like the god that creates, the Sun; his thought is truth and he guards all strengths by his will. He is a true force that is expressed by many and is to be pondered on like a blissful self.

देवो न यः पृथिवीं विश्वधाया उपक्षेति हितमित्रो न राजा ।
पुरःसदः शर्मसदो न वीरा अनवद्या पतिजुष्टेव नारी ॥ ३॥

He is as if the Godhead that foundeth all things lodging on the wide earth like a king with many loving friends. He is like a band of heroes marching in our front, marching to the house of bliss. He is like a woman faultless and beloved of her lord.

तं त्वा नरो दम आ नित्यमिद्धमग्ने सचन्त क्षितिषु ध्रुवासु ।
अधि द्युम्नं नि दधुर्भूर्यस्मिन्भवा विश्वायुर्धरुणो रयीणाम् ॥ ४॥

Therefore men cling to thee, O Fire, kindled eternal in the house, in the abiding worlds of thy habitation; for they have placed in thee a great light. Be our universal life; be the hold of our treasure.

वि पृक्षो अग्ने मघवानो अश्युर्वि सूरयो ददतो विश्वमायुः ।
सनेम वाजं समिथेष्वर्यो भागं देवेषु श्रवसे दधानाः ॥ ५॥

O Fire, let the masters of the wealth enjoy thy satisfying things and the illumined seers, the givers the universal life. Warriors in the clashes of the battle, let us conquer plenitude, let us set our portion in the gods for an inspired knowledge.

ऋतस्य हि धेनवो वावशानाः स्मदूध्नीः पीपयन्त द्युभक्ताः ।
परावतः सुमतिं भिक्षमाणा वि सिन्धवः समया सस्रुरद्रिम् ॥ ६॥

The cows of the Truth, the cows enjoyed in heaven, have given us to drink lowing with happy udders; its rivers have flowed

evenly over the mountain and claim right thinking as an alms from the Truth's supreme region.

> त्वे अग्ने सुमतिं भिक्षमाणा दिवि श्रवो दधिरे यज्ञियासः ।
> नक्ता च चक्रुरुषसा विरूपे कृष्णं च वर्णमरुणं च सं धुः ॥७॥

O Fire, praying in thee for right thinking as for an alms from on high, the masters of sacrifice set inspired knowledge in the heavens: they made night and day of two different forms and joined together the black and the rosy hue.

> यान्राये मर्तान्त्सुषूदो अग्ने ते स्याम मघवानो वयं च ।
> छायेव विश्वं भुवनं सिसक्ष्यापप्रिवान् रोदसी अन्तरिक्षम् ॥८॥

The mortals whom thou makest to haste to felicity, make us of them, even us and the masters of riches. Fill earth and air and heaven; cling to the whole world like a shadow.

> अर्वद्भिरग्ने अर्वतो नृभिर्नॄन्वीरैर्वीरान्वनुयामा त्वोताः ।
> ईशानासः पितृवित्तस्य रायो वि सूरयः शतहिमा नो अश्युः ॥९॥

O Fire, give us thy protection; may we vanquish their war-horses by our war-horses, their strong men by our strong men, their heroes by our heroes: may the seers have the mastery of the riches discovered by our fathers and may they enjoy them living a hundred winters.

> एता ते अग्न उचथानि वेधो जुष्टानि सन्तु मनसे हृदे च ।
> शकेम रायः सुधुरो यमं तेऽधि श्रवो देवभक्तं दधानाः ॥१०॥

O creator, O Fire, may these words be pleasant to thy mind and to thy heart. Let our yoke be firm and our strength control the reins of thy opulence; let us hold the inspired knowledge that is enjoyed by the gods.

Appendix

The following letter was written in response to criticisms of the opening chapter of *The Secret of the Veda* made in a review of the first issue of the *Arya*. The review appeared in the *Hindu* of Madras on 24 August 1914. Sri Aurobindo's letter was written on 26 August and published the next day in the *Hindu*.

Interpretation of the Veda

Mr. Aurobindo Ghose writes to us from Pondicherry: —

While thanking you for the generous appreciation in your review of the "Arya", may I also crave the indulgence of your columns, — if indeed you can spare so much space at such a time when the whole world is absorbed in the gigantic homicidal conflict convulsing Europe, — for an answer to your criticisms on my "Secret of the Veda", or rather to an explanation of my standpoint which the deficiencies of my expression and the brief and summary character of my article in the "Arya" have led you, in some respects, to misconceive?

Surely, I have nowhere said that "knowledge of which no origin can be traced to previous sources must necessarily be disregarded or discarded"! That would be indeed a monstrous proposition! My point was that such knowledge, when it expressed a developed philosophy and psychology, stood in need of historical explanation, — a very different matter. If we accept the European idea of an evolving knowledge in humanity, — and it is on that basis that my argument proceeded — we must find the source of the Brahmavada either in an extraneous origin such as a previous Dravidian culture — a theory which I cannot admit, since I regard the so-called Aryans and Dravidians as one homogeneous race — or in a previous development, of which the records have either been lost or are to be found in the Veda itself. I cannot see how this argument involves a *regressus ad infinitum* except in so far as the whole idea of evolution and progressive causality lies open to that objection. As to the origins of the Vedic religion, that is a question which cannot be solved at present for lack of data. It does not follow that it had no origins or in other words that humanity was not prepared by a progressive spiritual experience for the Revelation.

Again, I certainly did not intend to express my own idea in the description of the Upanishads as a revolt of philosophic minds against the ritualistic materialism of the Vedas. If I held that view, I could not regard the earlier Sruti as an inspired scripture or the Upanishads as Vedanta and I would not have troubled myself about the secret of the Veda. It is a view held by European scholars and I accepted it as the logical consequence, if the ordinary interpretations of the hymns, whether Indian or European, are to be maintained. If the Vedic hymns are, as represented by Western scholarship, the ritualistic compositions of joyous and lusty barbarians the Upanishads "have then to be conceived as a revolt . . . against the ritualistic materialism of the Vedas." From both premiss and conclusion I have dissented and I have finally described, not only the Upanishads, but all later forms, as a development from the Vedic religion and not a revolt against its tenets.

Our Indian doctrine avoids the difficulty in another way, by interpreting the Veda as a book of ritual hymns and revering it as a book of knowledge. It puts together two ancient truths without reconciling them effectively. In my view, that reconciliation can only be effected by seeing even in the exterior aspect of the hymns not a ritualistic materialism, but a symbolic ritualism. No doubt the karmakanda was regarded as an indispensable stepping-stone to the knowledge of the Atman. That was an article of religious faith, and as an article of faith I do not dispute its soundness. But it becomes valid for the intellect — and in an intellectual inquiry I must proceed by intellectual means, — only if the karmakanda is so interpreted as to show how its performance assists, prepares or brings about the higher knowledge. Otherwise, however much the Veda may be revered in theory, it will be treated in practice as neither indispensable nor helpful and will come in the end to be practically set aside — as has actually happened.

I am aware that some hymns of the Veda are interpreted in a sense other than the ritualistic; even the European scholars admit higher religious and spiritual ideas in the "later hymns" of the Vedas. I am aware also that separate texts are quoted

in support of philosophical doctrines. My point was that such exceptional passages do not alter the general tone and purport given to the hymns in the actual interpretations we possess. With those interpretations, we cannot use the Rig Veda as a whole, as the Upanishads can be used as a whole, as the basis of a high spiritual philosophy. Now, it is to the interpretation of the Veda as a whole and to its general character that I have addressed myself.

I quite acknowledge that there has always been a side-stream of tendency making for the adhyatmic interpretation of the Veda even as a whole. It would be strange if in a nation so spiritually minded such attempts had been entirely lacking. But still these are side-currents and have not received general recognition. For the Indian intellect in general, there are only two interpretations, Sayana's and the European. Addressing myself to that general opinion, it is with these two that I am practically concerned.

I am still of the opinion that the method and results of the early Vedantins differed entirely from the method and results of Sayana, for reasons I shall give in the second and third numbers of "Arya". Practically, not in theory, what is the result of Sayana's commentary? What is the general impression it leaves on the mind? Is it the impression of "Veda", a great Revelation, a book of highest knowledge? Is it not rather that which the European scholars received and from which their theories started, a picture of primitive worshippers praying to friendly gods, friendly but of a doubtful temper, gods of fire, rain, wind, dawn, night, earth and sky, for wealth, food, oxen, horses, gold, the slaughter of their enemies, even of their critics, victory in battle, the plunder of the conquered? And if so, how can such hymns be an indispensable preparation for the Brahmavidya? Unless, indeed, it is a preparation by contraries, by exhaustion or dedication of the most materialistic and egoistic tendencies, somewhat as the grim old Hebrew Pentateuch may be described as a preparation for the mild evangel of Christ. My position is that they were indispensable not by a mechanical virtue in the sacrifice, but because the experiences to which they are the key and which were symbolised by the ritual, are necessary to an

integral knowledge and realisation of Brahman in the universe and prepare the knowledge and realisation of the transcendent Brahman. They are, to paraphrase Shankara's description, mines of all knowledge, knowledge on all the planes of consciousness, and do fix the conditions and relations of the divine, the human and the animal element in the being.

I do not claim that mine is the first attempt to give an adhyatmic interpretation of the Veda. It is an attempt — the first or the hundredth matters little — to give the esoteric and psychological sense of the Veda based throughout on the most modern method of critical research. Its interpretation of Vedic vocables is based on a re-examination of a large part of the field of comparative Philology and a reconstruction on a new basis which I have some hope will bring us nearer to a true science of Language. This I propose to develop in another work, the "Origins of Aryan Speech". I hope also to lead up to a recovery of the sense of the ancient spiritual conceptions of which old symbol and myth give us the indications and which I believe to have been at one time a common culture covering a great part of the globe with India, perhaps, as a centre. In its relation to this methodical attempt lies the only originality of the "Secret of the Veda".

The Hindu, 27 August 1914

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

In August 1914, Sri Aurobindo began to publish *The Secret of the Veda* in the first issue of the philosophical review *Arya*. This series was accompanied by a related one, *Selected Hymns*. *Selected Hymns* was followed a year later by *Hymns of the Atris*. These works, written and published in monthly instalments between 1914 and 1917, form Parts One to Three of the present volume.

Besides *Selected Hymns* and *Hymns of the Atris*, other Vedic translations appeared in the *Arya* at various times between 1915 and 1920. They were usually introduced when a page or two had to be filled at the end of a 64-page issue. These translations have been placed in the order of their original publication in Part Four, "Other Hymns".

Thus this volume contains all writings on and translations of the Veda published by Sri Aurobindo in the *Arya*. Some of what appeared in the *Arya* was prefigured by essays, translations and notes on the Veda written between 1912 and 1914. However, none of this earlier material was incorporated directly in the works that came out in the *Arya*. Sri Aurobindo's manuscript writings on the Veda are included in *Vedic Studies with Writings on Philology*, volume 14 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. His translations of hymns to Agni are published in volume 16, *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*.

The Secret of the Veda. This, Sri Aurobindo's most important expository work on the Veda, appeared in the *Arya* in twenty-four consecutive instalments between August 1914 and July 1916. (The second chapter was printed in two instalments.) Sri Aurobindo never revised it, apart from minor alterations in Chapter 17. The last instalment of this work in the *Arya* ended with the following footnote:

> We propose for the present to discontinue the Secret of the Veda so as to make room in the third year of the Arya for other matter, but we shall subsequently resume and complete the series.

Sri Aurobindo never found time to resume the series, and left *The Secret of the Veda* incomplete.

Selected Hymns. These thirteen translations with commentaries were published in the first twelve issues of the *Arya*, from August 1914 to July 1915. (Two appeared in the first issue.) A footnote at the beginning of the first instalment, explaining the nature of the translations, is printed as an Author's Note in the present edition. At the end of the last instalment, Sri Aurobindo noted that he had selected "a few brief and easy hymns" with the idea of "explaining by actual examples the secret of the Veda", but that "other translations of a more general character" would be necessary to show that this was "the pervading sense and teaching of the Rig Veda." It was evidently for this purpose that he began *Hymns of the Atris* in the next issue of the *Arya*.

Hymns of the Atris. In July 1915, Sri Aurobindo announced in "The 'Arya's' Second Year" that he intended, from the following issue,

> to replace the *Selected Hymns* by a translation of the Hymns of the Atris (the fifth Mandala of the Rig Veda) so conceived as to make the sense of the Vedic chants at once and easily intelligible without the aid of a commentary to the general reader.

Hymns of the Atris began to appear in the *Arya* in August 1915 and continued until December 1917. This work consists of translations of two series of Suktas ("hymns") from the fifth Mandala ("book") of the Rig Veda, along with introductory chapters, a summary of each hymn and interpretative notes. The introductory chapters consist of a foreword, a general introduction entitled "The Doctrine of the Mystics", and two essays on the gods to whom the hymns are addressed: "Agni, the Divine Will-Force" and "The Guardians of the Light". The fifth Mandala of the Rig Veda comprises eighty-seven hymns composed by Rishis of the Atri clan. Sri Aurobindo translated forty-three of these: all twenty-eight hymns to Agni (V.1–28), all eleven hymns to Mitra-Varuna (V.62–72), both hymns to Usha (V.79, 80), the hymn to Surya Savitri (V.81) already translated and commented upon in *Selected Hymns*, and a hymn to Varuna (V.85), rendered in two versions to show its "exoteric" as well as its "esoteric" sense. (See also "A Hymn of the

Thought-Gods" in the next section.) Sri Aurobindo later retranslated the hymns to Agni from the fifth Mandala; the versions that appeared in the *Arya* are reproduced here, while the revised translations are published in *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*.

Other Hymns. These sixteen translations from various books of the Rig Veda were published in the *Arya* at different times between 1915 and 1920. They are reproduced here in the order in which they originally appeared. The last nine form a series. Apart from two pairs of related hymns, the rest have no obvious connection with each other, but illustrate a wide range of approaches to rendering the Veda into English.

A Vedic Hymn (Rig Veda VII.60). This translation of a hymn of Vasishtha to Surya and Mitra-Varuna, arranged in three paragraphs, was published in the *Arya* in August 1915.

A Hymn of the Thought-Gods. Published in the *Arya* in February 1916. This is not a translation but a paraphrase of the hymns to the Maruts by the Rishi Shyavashwa of the Atri clan; it is based on Rig Veda V.52 and, in the last three paragraphs, on scattered verses from V.53–61. It appeared in the *Arya* while *Hymns of the Atris* was running, but did not form part of that series.

The God of the Mystic Wine (Rig Veda IX.75, 42). Published in the *Arya* in September 1916. These two hymns to Soma were "rendered as literally as possible", in contrast to the method of interpretative translation usually employed in the *Arya*. The Sanskrit text in transliteration was printed at the bottom of the page in the *Arya*. It has been replaced in this edition by the text in Devanagari before each verse, as has been supplied for the other translations.

The Vedic Fire (Rig Veda I.94, 97). These two hymns to Agni were published in the *Arya* in September 1917. In translating the first hymn, Sri Aurobindo joined the first half of the last verse with the preceding verse. He omitted the second half of the verse, a formula which occurs at the end of most of the hymns of Kutsa Angirasa and is unrelated to the rest of this hymn.

A Vedic Hymn to the Fire (Rig Veda I.59). Published in the *Arya* in January 1920, after a gap of two years during which no Vedic translations came out in the review. The translation is missing the

sixth verse, probably due to lack of space on the last page of the *Arya* issue. A complete translation is published in *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*.

Parashara's Hymns to the Lord of the Flame (Rig Veda I.65–73). These nine hymns were published in the *Arya* in February, June, July and August 1920. They were numbered from 1 to 9 in the order of their appearance: I.65, 67, 68, 66 and 69–73. Subsequently Sri Aurobindo revised them for inclusion in *Hymns to the Mystic Fire* (1946). In the present volume they are reproduced as originally published in the *Arya*, in the order indicated above.

Appendix: *Interpretation of the Veda*. This letter was written on 26 August 1914, according to an entry in Sri Aurobindo's *Record of Yoga*. In the letter, Sri Aurobindo addressed himself to some remarks on his theory of Vedic interpretation made in an article that appeared in the *Hindu*, a daily newspaper of Madras, on 24 August. The *Hindu* printed Sri Aurobindo's letter on the 27th under the title "Interpretation of the Veda". The present text has been checked against the files of the *Hindu*.

Publishing history. After their appearance in the *Arya*, none of the writings in this volume were reprinted during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. He expressed some dissatisfaction with them in their existing state and wished to revise them thoroughly before allowing them to be published in book-form. As early as 1920 he wrote to someone who wished to translate *The Secret of the Veda* into Gujarati:

> The "Secret of the Veda" is not complete and there are besides many imperfections and some errors in it which I would have preferred to amend before the book or any translation was published.

In the Foreword to the first edition of *Hymns to the Mystic Fire* (1946), Sri Aurobindo explained why *The Secret of the Veda* and the accompanying translations had not been reprinted:

> The interpretation I have put forward was set out at length in a series of articles with the title "The Secret of the Veda" in the monthly philosophical magazine, "Arya", some thirty years ago; written in serial form while still developing the theory and not quite complete in its scope or composed on

> a preconceived and well-ordered plan it was not published in book-form and is therefore not yet available to the reading public. It was accompanied by a number of renderings of the hymns of the Rig Veda which were rather interpretations than translations. . . .

Finally, when it was proposed in 1949 to bring out *The Secret of the Veda* as a book, Sri Aurobindo dictated in reply:

> The publication of the Secret of the Veda as it is does not enter into my intention. It was published in a great hurry and at a time when I had not studied the Rig Veda as a whole as well as I have since done. Whole chapters will have to be rewritten or written otherwise and a considerable labour gone through; moreover it was never finished and considerable additions in order to make it complete are indispensable.

Sri Aurobindo never found time for the necessary revision. After his passing, however, aware of the value of the material that had appeared in the *Arya*, the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre published in 1956 *The Secret of the Veda*, *Selected Hymns*, *Hymns of the Atris*, and seven of the "Other Hymns" under the title *On the Veda*. A new edition of the same text was brought out by the same publisher (renamed Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education) in 1964. Both these editions included as an appendix an essay from Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts, "The Origins of Aryan Speech".

In 1971, most of the same material was published as *The Secret of the Veda*, volume 10 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. In that edition, "The Doctrine of the Mystics" was omitted from *Hymns of the Atris* and printed in full in *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*, in place of the excerpt originally included in that book; the section of "Other Hymns" was augmented by the reproduction of a number of translations from Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts; and the letter "Interpretation of the Veda" was added. The Centenary edition has been reprinted several times.

The present edition. *The Secret of the Veda with Selected Hymns* differs in content from earlier editions of the corresponding book (*On the Veda* and *The Secret of the Veda*) in that it contains all writings on

and translations of the Veda published by Sri Aurobindo in the *Arya*. Writings reproduced from manuscripts in previous editions — "The Origins of Aryan Speech" and certain translations — have been placed in a new volume, *Vedic Studies with Writings on Philology*. "The Doctrine of the Mystics" has been restored to the text of *Hymns of the Atris*. The series entitled "Parashara's Hymns to the Lord of the Flame" is reproduced for the first time since it appeared in the *Arya*; the revised translations of these hymns brought out by Sri Aurobindo in 1946 remain in *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*. Three other *Arya* translations of hymns to Agni, omitted from *The Secret of the Veda* in 1971 when they were added to *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*, are also reproduced in the present volume. All texts have been carefully checked against the *Arya*.

Vedic quotations. Vedic quotations and references have been checked against a standard edition of the Rig Veda and corrected if necessary. Sri Aurobindo sometimes adapted Sanskrit quotations to suit his context, particularly with regard to case endings, number and word order. Moreover, he often separated the words in transliteration for clarity or for metrical reasons. (See his remarks on pp. 17–18 concerning the "euphonic combination of separate words" in the Veda.) Where other discrepancies were found, the received text of the Rig Veda has generally been followed.

In *The Secret of the Veda* (Part One), Sri Aurobindo often identified quotations from the Rig Veda by references to the Mandala, Sukta and Rik. In passages where most quotations are so identified, the editors have supplied missing references in parentheses according to Sri Aurobindo's own style. But in other texts, where Sri Aurobindo provided few or no references, references have not been inserted in this edition. This applies in particular to the chapters introducing the translations in Part Three — especially "The Guardians of the Light", where the *Arya* text contains dozens of unidentified Vedic allusions and quotations, with or without the use of quotation marks. The sources of these are identified in a table in the reference volume (volume 35) for the convenience of readers who wish to consult the original verses.

In Parts Two to Four, the *Saṁhitā* text of the translated hymns has been supplied in Devanagari (without accents), as in the previous edition.